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Latino Attitudes Toward Violence: The Effect of Americanization

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LATINO ATTITUDES TOWARD VIOLENCE: THE EFFECT OF

AMERICANIZATION

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The instant research is intended as a response to the growing public and political concerns for Latino (primarily Mexican) immigration, and fear of a Latino "crime problem". Despite concerns over this perceived problem, previous studies have consistently shown that a linkage between immigration and crime is not supported by the data (Martinez & Lee, 2000). Still, researchers have argued that Latino crime is a phenomenon that warrants continued examination—especially since there appears to be some kind of relationship between acculturation and criminal behavior among this ethnic group. The primary research question asks: "To what extent do Latinos support the use of violence, and does this change depending on their level of acculturation?" Through the use of an internet-based survey, the researcher measured socio-demographic characteristics, level of acculturation, and cultural attitudes (norms) toward violence.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

At the turn of the 20th century, immigrants and their descendants were presumed

to be disproportionately involved in crime and delinquency—a presumption that was

based on their economic position in society, as well as the special social conditions they

faced upon arrival to the United States (Abbott, 1915; Bui & Thongniramol, 2005;

Glueck, 1937; Immigration Commission, 1911; Sellin, 1938; Vigil, 2002). Political

influence, fueled by public fear of immigration, resulted in a wave of studies examining

the effects of immigration on crime, the first of which was conducted in 1901 (Industrial

Commission, 1901). The findings of this study, and others that immediately followed

(i.e., Immigration Commission, 1911), were suspect and the results were inconsistent at

best (Abbott, 1915; Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Martinez & Lee, 2000). By and large,

early findings suggested that immigrants, in comparison to their American-born

counterparts, were *not* prone to criminality based on violence-provoking cultural

attributes, although researchers maintained that immigration had injurious effects on

society (Glueck, 1937; Sellin, 1938; Thomas & Znaniecki, 1920; Wirth, 1931).

Contemporary Immigration

From the latter part of that century until present time there has been a gradual

demographic shift occurring in the U.S. Contemporary immigration includes a

heterogeneous group of individuals arriving from places such as Asia and the Caribbean,

but disproportionately from Latin American countries (Suàrez-Orozco & Pàez, 2002).

In fact, Census estimates from 2006 indicated that the 44.3 million civilian non-

institutionalized Latinos in the U.S. represented 14.8% of the total population ("Hispanics

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in the United States", n.d.), suggesting that Latinos may have surpassed African Americans as the largest minority group in the nation (Suàrez-Orozco & Pàez, 2002). Moreover, it has been projected that the U.S. Latino population—with both larger and younger families (Ramirez, 2004; Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2003)—is going to triple by the year 2050 (U.S. Census, 2004).

Latinos in the U.S.

Despite the public perception that most U.S. Latinos are in the U.S. illegally, official data have indicated that the majority are U.S.-born (Suàrez-Orozco & Pàez, 2002; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). Specifically, the Census' American Community Survey estimates for 2006 indicated that about 60% of all U.S. Latinos were born in the United States. The Census has also indicated that first generation immigrants are relatively recent arrivals. Particularly, population estimates from the year 2000 revealed that, of foreign-born Latinos, almost half (46%) arrived to the U.S. between 1990 and 2000 (Ramirez, 2004).

Latinos, as a whole, differ from non-Latino Whites with respect to several key characteristics (Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2003; Suàrez-Orozco & Pàez, 2002). Among the more controversial characteristics include their adherence to cultural traditions, persistent ties to their countries of origin (particularly Mexico), and continued use of the Spanish language—all of which are viewed as indicators of a failure and possible resistance to assimilate into the dominant (American) culture (Cornelius, 2002; Suàrez-Orozco & Pàez, 2002). According to 2002 Census estimates, Latinos were more likely to reside in center cities within metropolitan areas (45.6% vs. 21.1%) (Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2003). Further, in 2004, Latinos were relatively young, as the proportion of children under the

age of 18 was greater than that of non-Latino Whites (34.3% vs. 22.3%). In terms of

educational attainment, Latinos aged 25 and older were *less* likely to have graduated high

school (60.0% vs. 88.6%) and have a bachelor's degree or higher (12.7% vs. 29.7%).

Moreover, 40.4% of Latinos that year had less than a high school education, compared to

11.4% of non-Latino whites. Not surprisingly, non-Latino Whites fared better than

Latinos economically, with the latter having higher unemployment rates (8.1% vs. 5.1%),

lower earnings, and almost three times the number of people living in poverty (22% vs.

9%) ("Hispanics in the United States", n.d.).

It should be noted that these findings do not account for generational differences.

In other words, the Census does not distinguish between foreign and U.S.-born Latinos in

terms of data collection and reporting. Although there is a modest proportion of first-

generation (foreign-born), the overwhelming majority of contemporary U.S. Latinos are

descendents of 20th century immigrants. In fact, according to recent estimates (Fry &

Passel, 2009), the number of Latino children (under the age of 18) living in the U.S. has

nearly tripled from 1980 (6 million) to 2008 (16 million). Given a surge in the number of

young Latino adults who migrated to the U.S. during the 1980s and 1990s, there has also

been a change in the composition of Latino children in terms of their generational status.

Whereas the majority of Latino children living in the U.S. in 1980 were third or higher

generation (both parents born in the U.S.), the number of youth born to immigrant parents

by 2007 had more than quadrupled. Consequently, a majority (52%) of Latino youth

(under the age of 18) now living in the U.S. are second-generation (followed by 37% of

third or higher generation, and 11% first-generation), defined as "U.S.-born, second-

generation children of immigrants" or "1.5-generation immigrants who were born abroad

but experienced major socialization as children in the United States, arriving by around age ten" (Smith, 2002, p. 121).

There are distinct differences between Latinos of varying generational status with respect to several key characteristics including English fluency, educational attainment socioeconomic status, and family composition (Fry & Passel, 2009; Suàrez-Orozco & Pàez, 2002). Fry and Passel (2009) found that 43% of the first-generation, 21% of second-generation, and 5% third or higher generation children of immigrants were not fluent in English. Additionally, Latino children of the third or higher generation were more likely to have parents who finished high school. In contrast, 47% of the first-generation and 40% of the second-generation had parents who had attained less than a high school education. Second-generation children were more likely to live in married couple families (73%), as compared to 69% of the first-generation and 52% in the third or higher generation. The chances of living in poverty were higher for children of the first generation (34%), whereas 26% of second-generation, and 24% third or higher generation lived in poverty.

These statistics are important in the context of this study, in that they indicate a sizeable proportion of Latinos are: (a) economically disadvantaged; (b) educationally disadvantaged; (c) not proficient in the English language; (d) living in metropolitan areas, and therefore, are likely to be residentially segregated in neighborhoods among other disadvantaged ethnic and racial minorities; (e) recent arrivals, and therefore, likely to still be coping with cultural change; and, (f) relatively young and U.S.-born. Research on Latino youth, particularly those of the second-generation, is important given that most of these factors have historically placed certain groups at an increased risk for involvement

in crime and delinquency (McNulty & Bellair, 2003; Sampson, Morenoff, & Raudenbush, 2005; Sellin, 1938; Shaw & McKay, 1942; Thomas & Znaniecki, 1920; Vigil, 2002 & 2004; Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1967).

Magnitude of the Problem

Not unlike their largely European immigrant predecessors of centuries ago, contemporary Latino immigrants present a complex mix of cultural baggage that causes fear and apprehension in most Americans (Cornelius, 2002). Public apprehension of Latinos is exacerbated with the emergence of an oppositional youth culture (Vigil, 2003; Zhou, 1997) and street gangs, about half of which are comprised of Latino youth (Egley, Howell, & Major, 2006). Contemporary criminological research, however, has generally focused on race rather than ethnicity—with Blacks and Whites as the two major groups under examination (Martinez, 1997; Martinez & Lee, 2000; McNulty & Bellair, 2003). Of the scant but growing number of studies that have included Latinos in the analyses, most have continued to show a weak relationship between immigration and crime or violence among recent arrivals (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Lee, Martinez, & Rodriguez, 2000; Lee, Martinez, & Rosenfeld, 2001; Martinez, 2000; Martinez, 2002; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Sampson, Morenoff, & Raudenbush, 2005; Sorenson & Lew, 2000). When comparing research findings from within Latino groups, however, one particular result has emerged— Latino involvement in violence may, to some extent, be more prevalent among second and successive-generations (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Sampson, Morenoff, & Raudenbush, 2005; Vigil, 2002). This finding is of particular interest, in that it echoes the patterns of much earlier research on European immigrants (Abbott, 1915; Glueck, 1937; Sellin, 1938; Sutherland, 1934).

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For example, in their examination of the effects of immigration on homicide in three major cities (Miami, El Paso, and San Diego), Martinez and Lee (2000) found a negative relationship between recent immigration and Latino-perpetrated homicide. In short, first-generation immigrants were less likely than their second or successive-generation counterparts to offend. This particular finding has been corroborated by other studies that examined Latino involvement in violence (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Sampson, et al., 2005). For example, in their survey of risk factors related to violence, including self-reported measures of involvement in criminal behavior (i.e., arson, assault, robbery) and possession or use of a weapon, Sampson et al. (2005) reported that, when compared to their foreign-born counterparts, the risk of engaging in violence was higher among second and third generation immigrant Latinos. In another study that examined the self-reported crime/delinquency (including measures of substance abuse, property delinquency, and violent delinquency, such as serious fighting and use of weapons) of Latinos, first-generation students were less likely than second or successive-generation students to self report substance abuse and violent delinquency (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005).

The bulk of the research on the recent immigration-crime link, especially pertaining to Latino violence, has focused on gangs (see Bankston, 1998; Malec, 2006; Lopez & O'Donnell Brummett, 2003; Santman, Myner, & Cappellety, 1997; Vigil, 2002, 2003 & 2004). Although these studies are instructive as to the relationship between urban settlement patterns of immigrants, social isolation, marginalization, and the formation of delinquent subcultures among Latino youth (see Vigil, 2002, 2003 & 2004), much of the research fails to compare gang involvement between Latinos of different

generations or to provide reasons to believe that immigration enhances gang activity (Martinez & Lee, 2000).

Additionally, the availability of national data focused specifically on Latino-perpetrated crimes is limited, making it hard to determine the magnitude and prevalence of Latino involvement in violence. Although offender race is represented within the *Uniform Crime Report* (UCR), there is no separate designation for ethnicity. One major exception to the limited availability of national data is the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). Information pertaining to offender characteristics, including Hispanic ethnicity, is reported for some populations of offenders such as violent felons and prison and jail populations. Based on state court processing statistics of felony convictions for murder, rape, robbery, and assault in large urban counties over the period between 1990 and 2002, Latinos accounted for 30 percent of all violent felons—falling between non-Latino Blacks (40%) and non-Latino Whites (26%). With the exception of rape, where Latinos accounted for the smallest proportion of offenders (23%), Latino-perpetrated crimes consistently fell between that of Blacks and Whites for murder, robbery, and assault (Reaves, 2006).

Similar findings were found within correctional statistics. For example, BJS estimates for 2001 indicated that at the end of that year, 5.6 million U.S. adults had at some point in their lifetimes served time in state or federal prison. In comparison to White males (2.6%), the prevalence of imprisonment was highest for Blacks (16.6%) and Hispanics (7.7%) (Bonczar, 2003). Lifetime likelihood of going to state or federal prison was also estimated to be higher for Black and Hispanic males (18.6% and 10%, respectively) when compared to Whites (3.4%). Hispanic males have also shared

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majority status with Blacks inside U.S. prisons and jails. In 2001, 64% of the state prison population consisted of racial and ethnic minorities. In 2002, Hispanics comprised about 19% of the jail population, compared to Asians (1%) and American Indians (1%); Blacks were in the majority, with 40% represented in U.S. jails (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009).

A small but growing number of studies have examined violent crime among Latinos by region, specifically homicide [Alvarez, Nalla, & Bachman, 1999 (Arizona); Lee, Martinez, & Rodriguez, 2000 (Texas & Florida); Lee, Martinez, & Rosenfeld, 2001 (Florida, Texas & California); Martinez, 1997 (Florida); Martinez, 2000 (Illinois, Texas, Florida & California); Martinez & Lee, 2000 (Texas, Florida & California)]. While these studies have indicated a higher number of Latino-perpetrated homicides compared to those committed by non-Latino Whites, Latino rates did not rise to the level found among Blacks (Martinez, & Rodriguez, 2000; Lee, Martinez, & Rosenfeld, 2001; Martinez, 1997; Martinez, 2000; Martinez, 2002; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Phillips, 2002). Because Latinos experience discrimination and economic deprivation similar to Blacks, this finding has been of particular interest (Lee, et al., 2001; Martinez & Lee, 2000).

Past research has produced some evidence that the U.S. assimilation experience results in attitudinal and behavioral changes for some immigrant groups, including Asians (Bhanot & Senn, 2007), Portuguese (Morrison & James, 2009), and Latinos (Branton, 2007; Portes, Parker, & Cobas, 1980; Schultz & Unipan, 2000). Despite the existence of this line of research and a persistent public concern for Latino-perpetrated violence, studies of Latino attitudes toward deviance and violence have been rare. For example, three studies were identified that were specific to Latino attitudes in the context of

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assimilation and acculturation, but these focused on political attitudes (Branton, 2007),

attitudes toward the environment (Schultz & Unipan, 2000), and perceptions of U.S.

society (Portes, Parker, & Cobas, 1980). In addition, research specific to attitudes toward

violence focused on tolerance for deviance (specifically, fighting) (Sampson, 1998) and a

cultural acceptance of violence under certain circumstances, particularly the right to kill

(Briceño-León, Camardiel, & Avila, 2006). Although the latter is instructive for

understanding a cultural acceptance of violence, the respondents were Latinos living in

seven Latin-American cities, therefore, precluding the examination of assimilation or

generational status.

The limited quantitative examination on the effects of assimilation on pro-violent

attitudes, particularly among young second and successive generations of Latinos,

implies a large gap in criminological research. In fact, although interest in studying

Latino populations in terms of their U.S. experiences has recently grown, several

questions remain regarding the relationship between assimilation variables and attitudes

toward violence. Until these relationships are better understood, the real influence of

assimilation on attitudes remains largely unknown. The following section provides a

definition of assimilation and how the term differs from acculturation, and a brief

introduction to the assimilation-crime link that has emerged in recent years.

The Role of Assimilation

The terms acculturation and assimilation have often been used interchangeably to

indicate the process of what Gordon (1964) referred to as ethnic "meetings" or the

divergence of "peoples". For the purposes of this study, assimilation and acculturation

are independent concepts. Borrowing from Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936, p.

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149), acculturation refers to "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups." Alternatively, assimilation refers to a larger process, of which acculturation is merely one factor or dimension (Gordon, 1964). More specifically, it is the process of integration, whereby immigrants of any generation attempt to adopt the cultural norms of the dominant or mainstream American culture (Caetano, et al., 2007; Gordon, 1964).

The theoretical assumptions and models guiding most conventional research on U.S. immigration, assimilation processes, and adaptive outcomes were developed by scholars at the University of Chicago (Vega, Zimmerman, Warheit, & Gil, n.d). Theories constructed to explain such concepts as the "marginal man" or marginality (Park, 1928; Stonequist (1937) were based on psychosocial and sociocultural perspectives that described individuals (immigrants) as being involved in a challenging and complex process of contact and adaptation. Assimilation or acculturation, in this sense, was viewed as a conceptual tug of war between multiple, and often conflicting, cultural groups that subscribed to divergent conduct norms of behavior (Park, 1928; Sellin, 1938). Thus, the "marginal man" is one who gets caught in the interplay between two or more cultural worlds, and therefore, is likely to experience of feelings of confusion, frustration, inferiority, and isolation (Vega, et al., n.d.).

Most studies on the assimilation-crime link center on conflict or "acculturation stress" (Berry, 2005), a concept largely grounded in stress or strain theories that emerged from the Chicago School. According to more recent literature, acculturation stress results from difficulties related to acculturation and assimilation into mainstream American

culture (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Caetano, et al., 2007; Hwang & Wood, 2008; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Smokwski & Bacallao; Zhou, 1997)—difficulties that are particularly encountered by individuals who belong to groups not fully accepted by the mainstream (e.g., Blacks, Latinos) (Portes & Zhou, 1993). In short, scholars have attempted to explain non-adaptive attitudes and behaviors through theoretical perspectives that integrate elements of individual strain and social control—particularly, broken bonds or attachments to more traditional others (parents). In this context, the argument largely rests on the ability of traditional culture to insulate or protect assimilating youth from acculturation stress (Berry, 2005) or strain as a result of integration to a potentially unwelcoming mainstream culture. Therefore, deviance, delinquency, or crime can be viewed as both a by-product of assimilation into American culture and as a result of acculturation gaps that weaken parent-child relationships.

As evidenced by an expanding body of assimilation/acculturation research, acculturation stress or strain may be responsible for varying levels of behavioral problems, youth aggression, substance abuse, and participation in criminal violence among Latino immigrants of all generations (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Caetano, et al., 2007; Lee, et al., 2000; McNulty & Bellair, 2003; Lopez & O'Donnell Brummett, 2003; Rivera, 1994; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2009; Vigil, 2002 & 2004). Further, researchers have found that parental control or conflict, perceived social capital, and the maintenance of cultural ties to one's culture of origin (biculturalism) have mediated, to some extent, stress-outcome relationships, particularly in terms of delinquency (Bui, 2009; Buriel, Calzada, & Vasquez, 1982; Morrison & James, 2009; Samaniego & Gonzales, 1999; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2009). Despite the apparent relationship between assimilation,

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social psychological stress or strain, and family or other cultural attachments and identities, the criminological research in this area has produced few comprehensive empirical models that account for all of the factors or conditions involved in this complex phenomenon.   It is for this reason that this study utilized a more integrated theoretical framework that included elements from both strain and social control perspectives. The theoretical framework guiding this study is introduced below and discussed in more detail elsewhere in the following chapters.

The Present Study

Researchers have argued that variation in exposure to violence and attitudes toward violence may account for group differences in violent behavior (McNulty & Bellair, 2003). Given the limited empirically-based evidence on second and successive-generations of Latinos that is specific to the relationship between assimilation and violence, some questions are left unresolved. The purpose of this study was to build on existing research by developing an understanding of an "attitudinal foundation" (Briceño-León, et al., 2006) for violent behavior. The extent to which Latinos of any generation approve of violence is still unclear. Particularly, given the complexity of the assimilation among Latino groups, and the associated risk factors that may lead to conflict and deviance, a more thorough examination of the process and how it is perceived by members of this group is in order. In addition, the literature would benefit from an understanding of whether patterns of differences in Latino perceptions of violence are consistent across social and demographic characteristics (e.g., level of education, socioeconomic status, religious beliefs), and across generational and ethnic Latino subgroups.

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To accomplish the above objectives, the present study examined the research questions from an assimilation framework—specifically, the segmented assimilation perspective (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997; Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005). This perspective is valuable in terms of understanding the assimilation process of second and successive-generation contemporary immigrants from Asia and Latin America (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997), and has been utilized in criminological research, specifically with Latinos (Bui & Thongiramol, 2005). Unlike classical assimilation theory which presumed a linear transition, and eventual conformity, into mainstream American culture for all immigrants (Gordon, 1964; Park, 1928), the segmented assimilation perspective predicts that the assimilation experience among immigrant generations (particularly, second-generation), and resulting behavioral patterns, may vary depending on the interaction between individual-level factors (e.g., education, English proficiency, place of birth, length of residency) and contextual factors (e.g., race, socioeconomic background) (Zhou, 1997). In this context, involvement in crime and delinquency is a product of a complex mix of factors that determine, to a large extent, the pathways and opportunities available to immigrants and their children by the current social and economic context of the country in which they assimilate (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

To explore the nature of the relationship between approval of violence and level of assimilation in the context of segmented assimilation perspective, this study surveyed a national sample of adolescent Latino males between the ages of 18-25 from different immigration generations and varied racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. To overcome the limitations of previous research and to accomplish the previously stated

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objectives, an internet-based survey was utilized. Particularly, the survey was designed

to measure demographical factors, level of assimilation, acculturation stress (strain) and

intergenerational conflicts (parent-child acculturation gaps), and attitudes (norms) toward

interpersonal violence and weapon carrying. An internet-based survey was chosen

because of the problematic nature in reaching Latino populations using conventional

methods.

The remainder of this dissertation is divided into the following five major

sections: Literature Review, Latino Assimilation in the United States, Methodology,

Official Data Analysis, and Discussion and Conclusions. Relevant appendices are

attached, and are referenced throughout the dissertation wherever necessary. The

following two chapters provide an examination of relevant literature pertaining to Latino

crime and delinquency, and a brief overview of the small number of studies pertaining to

Latino acceptance of violence, acculturation and assimilation, and the assimilation-crime

link. A description and summary of segmented assimilation is also presented, along with

a review of studies that tested this perspective.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this study was to determine the extent to which Latinos, particularly those belonging to second and successive-generations, condone violence and whether this is related to their assimilation experience in the U.S. This chapter begins by introducing the theoretical framework used to guide research on immigrant assimilation in the United States. Particularly, classical assimilation theoretical models are introduced and examined in terms of their relevance to the experiences of contemporary Latino immigrants and their children. More recent theoretical developments in this area are then presented, along with a summary of segmented assimilation theory, the theoretical framework guiding this study.

Defining Latinos

The term *Latino* is not consistently used throughout the literature; rather, researchers may refer to Hispanics, Latinos, or Latin Americans in general, or a specific subgroup by their countries of origin (e.g., Mexicans). For the purposes of the instant study, Latino is the preferred ethnic label where no subgroup has been identified.

United States' Latinos are a heterogeneous group of individuals and families who may subscribe to varied cultural codes that are dependent on several factors, particularly the country of origin (Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002). For this reason, the concept, Latino, should be operationalized to capture this diversity. Based on 2002 Census data, the U.S. Latino population contained persons from a variety of subgroups including Mexicans (66.9%), Central and South Americans (14.3%), Puerto Ricans (8.6%), Cubans (3.7%), and other Latino origins (6.5%) (Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2003). While these five

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categories represent most of the major Latino subgroups in the U.S., this study included

one additional subgroup that, according to Suárez-Orozco and Páez (2002), would more

accurately represent the major divisions—that is, Dominicans.   Latinos are also divided

by race. They may identify as White, Asian, Native American, Black, indigenous, and

"every possible combination thereof" (Suàrez-Orozco & Pàez, 2002, p.3). Race and

Latino subgroups, for the purposes of the instant study, are conceptualized in more detail

in chapter four (Methodology).

Theoretical Framework: The Assimilation Perspective

As discussed briefly in the preceding chapter, assimilation is a process whereby

people from diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural groups converge through gradual stages or

subprocesses (Barkan, et al., 1995; Gordon, 1964). Acculturation is one stage of the

overall assimilation process, and generally refers to a fusion of cultural codes between

dominant and non-dominant groups, whereby the cultures of one or both groups are

modified (Gordon, 1964).   The conflicts and controversies associated with assimilation

and its subprocesses are largely attached to the American immigration experience at least

as early as colonial times, where nation-building and the influx of immigrants of different

religious, national, and racial backgrounds were highly contested by early Anglo-

American settlers (Alba & Nee, 2003; Gordon, 1964). Depending on the time, place, and

particularly, the immigrant group, a favorable reception has been problematic, depending

on beliefs and prejudices held by larger society (Gordon, 1964; Suàrez-Orozco & Pàez,

2002).

The theoretical models underlying most early research on immigration can be

traced to the Chicago School, particularly to the work of Park (1920, 1950), Park and

Burgess (1924), Wirth (1928), and other contributors (Alba & Nee, 2003). Early

empirical models based on the assimilation experiences of southern and eastern European

immigrants emerged as a response to the resettlement experience of immigrants in the

growing urban landscape of Chicago during the early 20th century (Alba & Nee, 2003;

Bui & Thongniramol, 2005). Within the pool of assimilation research, these

sociological-oriented models are categorized under the umbrella of theories referred to as

the classical assimilation perspective (Alba & Nee, 2003).

Classical assimilationists viewed assimilation as a multistage process, whereby

immigrants and their descendants followed a straight-line path that led to the acquisition

of Anglo-Saxon culture—often referred to as a process of *Americanization* (Caetano et

al., 2007; Cofresi & Gorman, 2004; Gordon, 1964; Martinez, 1999; Park, 1920, 1950).

There are three propositions that are central to the classical perspective: first, that diverse

ethnic groups converge in a natural progression of adaptation and integration into

mainstream society; second, that this process involves the shedding of cultural traditions

and adoption of the values, beliefs, and norms of the new culture (acculturation); and

third, that once begun, the process involves a smooth, linear transition toward complete

absorption into the host society (Nagasawa, Qian, & Wong, 2001; Zhou, 1997). Further,

the classical perspective views assimilation as a positive experience, with Anglo

conformity to be the desired goal (Alba & Nee, 2003).

The two most prominent classical assimilation models are attributed to Park

(1928, 1950) and Gordon (1964) (Alba & Nee, 2003; Martinez, 1999). In Park's model,

referred to as the *Race-Relations Cycle*, there are four stages of race-relations to consider

in the social organization of divergent cultural groups: contact, competition,

accommodation, and assimilation (Park, 1950)[1]. According to his formulation of the assimilation process, each stage occurs in sequence in a linear progression, whereby the end result is the absence of ethnic and racial distinctions (hence, complete assimilation). Most importantly, Park suggested that assimilation, the final stage of his model, signified the disappearance of race-related conflicts. In other words, once immigrants became more Americanized through a progressive integration process, their struggles with discrimination, prejudice, and racism would end. While Park recognized that a variety of factors could cause individuals to become stuck at any one stage in his model (e.g., discrimination and institutional barriers to education or employment opportunities), he maintained that, once begun, the sequence of events associated with any particular stage were progressive and irreversible (Lyman, 2004).

The primary shortcoming of Park's model is its inability to fully explain the assimilation process. In fact, Park has been criticized for being relatively ambiguous on the concept of assimilation. While his model was able to explain the "natural history" of ethnic relations in terms of culture conflict and power struggles in the urban landscape at the turn of the 20th Century, it failed to account for the multidimensional nature of assimilation-- particularly, the complex sociopsychological processes encountered by those living the experience (Pedraza, 2005). Since immigration continued to be a critical issue in the years following Park's thesis, other theoretical models were advanced to more fully explain dimensions of assimilation and acculturation.

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[1] The original version was competition, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation (see Park and Burgess, 1924).

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One of the most notable assimilation theories that emerged by the middle of the 20th century was proposed by Gordon (1964). Gordon's conceptually advanced model suggested a seven-stage process of assimilation that included: cultural assimilation (acculturation), structural assimilation, martial assimilation, identification assimilation, attitude receptional assimilation, behavioral receptional assimilation, and civic assimilation (p. 71). The first stage, cultural or behavioral assimilation, refers to a multidimensional process involving the gradual disappearance of traditional cultural norms and behaviors, and subsequently, the replacement of traditional cultural patterns with those of the host society. Structural assimilation was regarded by Gordon as the keystone of assimilation, as it refers to the process whereby minority group members become socially integrated into the groups and institutions of the larger, dominant society at the primary level. According to Gordon, primary group-level relationships refer to the social networks individuals develop at school, work, and at social clubs or other recreational-type organizations. Marital assimilation, or amalgamation, occurs when assimilating groups have intermarried and interbred fully with the dominant culture. Identification assimilation simply refers to the development of a self-identity that replaces one's country of origin and is based exclusively on the host society (e.g., American). The next two stages, attitude and behavior receptional assimilation, respectively refer to the absence of prejudice and discrimination by the dominant subsociety which, according to Gordon, was comprised of middle-class White Protestants. Last, civic assimilation involves the absence of value and power conflict with respect to the cultural norms of dominant society (Gordon, 1964, pp. 70-71).

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Unlike the assimilation perspectives preceding his (e.g., Park, 1920, 1950), Gordon argued that assimilation was not necessarily a linear process but one that is a matter of degree, and that some groups may remain stagnant at any one particular stage indefinitely (Alba & Nee, 2003; Gordon, 1964). For Gordon, the first two stages in his model—acculturation and structural assimilation—were the most critical in terms of successful assimilation. Not only was cultural assimilation presumed to be the first type of assimilation to occur upon immigrant arrival to the U.S., but also, Gordon argued that it was likely to take place regardless of whether any of the remaining stages occurred.

There was an important caveat to this generalization, however. Although Gordon viewed the acculturation stage a prerequisite for the subsequent stages in his model, he recognized that it may not lead to the structural assimilation. Specifically, he suggested that there were two conditions by which acculturation could be slower than expected or even indefinitely delayed. The first condition, according to Gordon, applied to minority groups that were spatially isolated in rural areas (e.g., Native Americans living on reservations). The second condition, according to Gordon, is likely to occur when there is "unusually marked discrimination" against members of certain minority groups (i.e., African Americans) (Gordon, 1964, p. 78).

Gordon also stated that regardless of successful acculturation (of successive generations), complete assimilation is not guaranteed. For example, for second and successive generations who are more exposed to American social structure through school, the English language, work, and other primary groups, the acculturation dimension may be overwhelming. For these groups, the remaining stages of Gordon's model are dependent on social class mobility and the way these groups are received by

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the host country (the levels allowed by social class demands). In some cases, Gordon argued, large-scale intermarriage, and hence, integration with members of dominant society does not always occur. Furthermore, discrimination and prejudice are not always eliminated. Despite these very important exceptions, Gordon generalized that once structural assimilation successfully occurred, the remaining stages of his model would follow in a natural progression.

While some contemporary authors still subscribe to the classical view and its variants, the primary shortcoming of classical assimilation theories is that they do not fully account for the serious departure from the single-path trajectory leading to Americanization that today's immigrants and their children represent (Alba & Nee, 2003). Particularly, more recent evaluations of the immigration experience indicate that the process not only involves multiple stages, as Park's and Gordon's models proposed, but also multiple (segmented) alternative outcomes (Barkan, Vecoli, Alba, & Zunz, 1995; Portes & Zhou, 1993). Consequently, many scholars have rejected the classical assimilation approach citing criticisms that dispute its relevance or applicability to the experiences of contemporary immigrant groups and their children. The following section provides a more detailed description of these criticisms and some of the key differences between older and contemporary immigrant groups—differences that indicate the need for an alternative theoretical approach in understanding assimilation.

Traditional vs. Contemporary Immigration

There are two noteworthy differences between post-1965 and early 20th century waves of immigrants that should be considered in contemporary research. First, today's immigrants and their children vary in terms of group composition in contrast to the

European migrants of the early 20th century—particularly, in that a large majority of them are non-White individuals from Asia and Latin America. This variation in racial and ethnic make-up has important implications for the way new immigrants and their offspring are received by the host country (U.S.); it often determines their place within the larger social structure, and therefore, the opportunities available to them (Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002). Second, contemporary immigrants no longer enter the American social structure having low socioeconomic standing; rather, they come from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds—a point that emphasizes the likelihood that social class position (measured by indicators such as education, income, and participation in the labor market) may lead to variation in the assimilation experience (Alba & Nee, 2003; Hirschman, 2001; Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005). In addition to this important compositional and socioeconomic variation, three additional criticisms of the classical approach were identified and are discussed below.

One criticism of earlier (classical) assimilation models is that they collectively emphasized a "cultural blueprint" characterized by a linear progression of adaptation to mainstream American culture (Portes & Zhou, 1993). This straight-line path was viewed as an inevitable and irreversible process that eventually led immigrants and successive generations of their children away from their underprivileged backgrounds to social and economic mobility, and therefore, achievement within the American social structure (Gordon, 1964, Park, 1928; Zhou, 1997). However, like Gordon's (1964) earlier formulation of the assimilation experience, much of the research on new immigrants has identified a multidimensional process that differs greatly among groups, subgroups, and individuals (Hirschman, 2001). In sharp contrast to the large majority of early European

immigrants who were expected (and able) to eventually progress in terms of mobility over the course of generations, today's first-generation and their children face hostility, racialization, and weaker family/ethnic community economic resources, largely resulting from a changing economic climate that some would argue no longer welcomes or supports the need for immigrant labor (Hirschman, 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993). Such unique conditions emphasize the inapplicability of conventional models for explanatory purposes.

Another criticism of classical theories is the overall perception that assimilation is a one-sided process, and therefore, that immigrant groups have nothing to offer to larger society in the way of their unique cultures (Alba & Nee, 2003; Barkan, et al, 1995; Gordon, 1964; Portes & Zhou, 1993). In fact, the bulk of conventional assimilation research has pointed to Anglo conformity as the most prevalent ideology of American assimilation, as it became the normative standard to which immigrants and their children should measure their own aspirations, and most importantly, as the only way to attain upward mobility in the United States (Gordon, 1964).

In contrast to this view, contemporary authors of assimilation have argued that the process may be a reciprocal one, whereby assimilating groups and American society change as a result of integration and a convergence of cultural norms (Alba & Nee, 2003; Barkan, et al, 1995). Despite empirical confirmation of the gradual disappearance of ethnic and cultural distinctiveness over time and generations for some ethnic groups, among the new immigrants (particularly Latinos), ethnic and cultural identification appears vital and persistent. In fact, the presence of immigrants and their descendants has oftentimes revitalized communities across the U.S., and further, ethnic groups and larger

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society have derived advantages from some degree of cultural pluralism (i.e., Cubans in Miami) (Alba & Nee, 2003; Suárez-Orozco & Páez).

A third, and perhaps the most salient, criticism of classical approaches for the purposes of the instant study relates to the presumption that assimilation is a positive and desirable outcome. This presumption is based, in large part, on the classical hypothesis that longer duration in the U.S. leads to greater exposure to mainstream American culture, and thus, more positive outcomes in terms of a variety of structural and behavioral measures (e.g., school performance, economic progress).

There are several problems with this hypothesis. First, any evidence of the narrowing of cultural or socioeconomic differences between immigrants and the dominant group was taken as evidence of successful integration, and hence, social and economic mobility for immigrant groups (Gordon, 1964). In this context, classical models have been criticized as being Anglo conformist, unfalsifiable, and too conceptually simplistic (Alba & Nee, 2003; Greenman & Xie, 2008; Hirschman, 2001). Second, conventional studies never really examined why length of time spent in the U.S. was equivalent to positive experiences for most immigrants (and immigrant generations). Rather, the research focus was largely exploratory in nature, and offered little in the way of explanation. Last, and most importantly, more contemporary views on assimilation predict that longer residence in the U.S. will have disadvantageous outcomes, particularly for members of certain Latino subgroups (Buriel, Calzada, & Vasquez, 1982; Greenman & Xie, 2008; Portes, et al., 2005; Portes & Zhou, 1993). For example, empirical findings have revealed that, depending on the ethnic group, advanced levels of acculturation or assimilation (measured in terms of length of residence or ethnic identity) may have more

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adverse effects in terms of earnings (Valdez, 2006), educational attainment (Altschul, Oyserman, & Bybee, 2008; Gibson, 1997; Greenman & Xie, 2008; Hirschman, 2001), substance use (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Greenman & Xie, 2008), and other at-risk behaviors (Bui, 2009; Greenman & Xie, 2008; Fridrich & Flannery, 1995; Samaniego & Gonzales, 1999).

Contrary to the Anglo conformist ideology, the importance of maintaining some degree of one's own ethnic identity appears central to positive outcomes for members of the new immigration (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, & Haller, 2005). In fact, contemporary studies have found positive outcomes associated with biculturalism, a concept that has often been referred to as selective or additive acculturation (Portes, et al., 2005; Portes & Zhou, 1993). In the case of Latino immigrants and their descendants, it has also been referred to as transnationalism (Alba & Nee, 2003; Suarez). Bicultural (or transnational) individuals are able to maintain cultural, social, and economic ties to origin societies, while building successful relationships with the people and institutions of mainstream American society. It should be emphasized, however, that bicultural success for children of immigrants in terms of the assimilation experience remains largely dependent on other factors including race/ethnicity, geographic location, the strength of the ethnic community, and socioeconomic standing (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

Clearly there are some deficiencies in the classical perspective in its capacity to explain the experiences of more recent waves of non-European immigrants and their descendants (Alba & Nee, 2003; Zhou, 1997). In response to these deficiencies, there have been a number of explanations set forth to make sense of the assimilation experience of contemporary immigrants in the U.S.—particularly in terms of problematic

adaptation and involvement in crime or delinquency. The following section discusses the general theoretical direction of empirical research in this area.

Themes in the Literature on Contemporary Assimilation

In contrast to the macro-level approach that dominated classical writings and research on assimilation, current research tends to emphasize the importance of including individual-level social-psychological factors in assimilation models (Berry, 2005; Martinez & Lee, 2000). Accordingly, two general themes run through the more recent literature on assimilation related to second and successive generation children of immigrants—strain or stress/adaptation approaches and social control approaches.

Strain approaches. Strain or anomie approaches can be traced to broader opportunity structure paradigms (e.g., Durkheim, 1951; Merton, 1938) that emphasized limited access to opportunities for some groups seeking upward mobility in the social structure—particularly, within American society. Theoretical developments under this perspective primarily sought to explain deviant behavior as one outcome of a disjunction between success goals and the means to attain them (Akers & Sellers, 2004). Although originating at the macro level primarily through Durkheim's work on anomic conditions and suicide in modern societies (1951), anomie/strain theory was revised and expanded to explain both macro- and micro-level processes (Akers & Sellers, 2004).

Agnew (1992) introduced general strain theory which emphasized a micro-level, social psychological approach to understanding relationships between sources of stress or strain and individual deviant behavior (Akers & Sellers, 2004). In short, Agnew's central thesis is that crime and delinquency are adaptations to stress experienced by individuals. According to the theory, there are three types of stress or strain that produce deviant

behavior: the failure to achieve positively valued goals; the removal of positively valued stimuli; and, confrontation with negative stimuli. According to Agnew, deviance-producing strain is strongly associated with anger, which in large part is provoked by a number of stressful life events, pressures toward deviance, and a lack of effective internal and external controls such as self-control, peer associations, and beliefs that act to control these pressures toward deviance as the appropriate response (Agnew, 1992).

Within the current assimilation literature, the concept of strain as a result of stressful life events is comparable to acculturation stress, which specifically refers to difficulties or strains encountered by individuals when they come into contact with another culture (Berry, 2005). Several empirical studies have established that immigration and cultural change can produce long-term psychosocial stresses or strains that may lead to a number of non-adaptive attitudes and behavioral problems (Buriel, Calzada, & Vasquez, 1982; Fridrich & Flannery, 1995; Polo & Lopez, 2009; Samaniego & Gonzales, 1999; Vega, Khoury, Zimmerman, & Gil, 1995).   For example, findings have indicated that many immigrant individuals and families experience conflicts in terms of ethnic identity, family relations, native language loss, and acquisition of the English language (Altschul, Oyserman, & Bybee, 2008; Bui, 2009; Polo & Lopez, 2009; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Vega, Zimmerman, Warheit, & Gil, n.d.). Other sources of acculturative stress include discrimination, hostility, and rejection by larger society (Portes & Zhou, 1993). In the case of Latino adolescents, acculturative stress has been particularly linked to intergenerational acculturation gaps (primarily between parent and child). For example, research has indicated that differences in self-reported delinquency (substance use, property delinquency, and violent delinquency) can be explained in part

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by parent-child conflicts that increase with successive immigrant generations in the U.S. (Bui, 2009).

As in the larger strain theoretical framework, maladjustments are viewed as only one of several possible adaptations to acculturation stress (Berry, 2005). The point should be emphasized that the central premise of individual strain theories is that negative outcomes (e.g., pro-violent attitudes) occur when negative pressures, strains, or stressful experiences exceed the protective capacity of an individual's coping resources or mediators. In fact, recent findings suggest that the extent to which individuals are impacted by acculturative stressors or culture conflicts is largely shaped by available resources such as education, language skills, and their ability to minimize conflicts between home and external environments (school and work) (Polo & López, 2009).

Some of the specific factors found to mediate the relationship between acculturation stress and negative outcomes, particularly among second generation Latinos in the U.S., include parental support, and a commitment to traditional cultural values such as familialism and cultural pride (Altschul, et al., 2008; Vega, et al., n.d.). In fact, the pursuit of biculturalism (having a positive connection with both in-group and larger society and a strong in-group identity), when accompanied by a positive reception by larger society, appears to be the least stressful adaptation (Altschul, et al., 2008; Buriel, Calzada, & Vasquez, 1982; Caetano, Ramisetty-Mikler, Caetano Vaeth, & Harris, 2007; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2009). The extent to which mediators provide the necessary stability needed to effectively cope with acculturation stress is discussed in more detail below.

Social control approaches. Social control theoretical perspectives can be broadly understood as how bonds or attachments that are formed with primary groups such as family, peers, and schools can intervene to influence or control behavior. While social control approaches to deviance can be traced back to Durkheim and his conception of the collective consciousness (1961, 1984), one of the most authoritative writings can be found in the work of Hirschi (1969), whose landmark social bonds theory provided insight or perspective into the influence social bonds or attachments have on preventing delinquency among youth (Akers & Sellers, 2004; Bui, 2009).

Hirschi's (1969) central proposition was that crime or delinquency may result when social bonds are weakened or broken. According to the theory, there are four principal and highly intercorrelated elements that make up the social bond: attachment, commitment, involvement, and beliefs. Attachment refers to attachments to others with whom we admire, identify with, and have close emotional relationships with such as parents, other family members, and peers. Commitment refers to the extent to which individuals develop strong ties to their communities through employment, family obligations, and their social position. Involvement refers to the time one dedicates to participating in conventional activities, and belief refers to the endorsement of the laws and rules of society as a result of one's belief in their purpose and moral value. In other words, this element relates to agreement with the purpose of the laws and believing that they should be obeyed. Although all of the elements have important roles, Hirschi particularly emphasized the importance of attachments in the context of good family relationships, strong parent-child bonds, and parental supervision in maintaining conformity and controlling delinquent behavior. In fact, although theories of social

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control vary in terms of central propositions and explanations for crime and delinquency, most all of them emphasize the essential role of the family in the socialization of children, the maintenance of healthy parent-child relationships, and in helping children develop internal control through direct and effective supervision (Akers & Sellers, 2004; Bui, 2009).

In line with the central thesis of earlier control approaches, an individual's behavior, particularly law-abiding behavior, is largely dependent on the strength of the bonds to parents, adults, schoolteachers, and peers. In short, the weaker the element of bonding, the more likely the individual is to become involved in delinquency. This perspective may help to explain any connections between family relationships and school bonding that varies with immigration generations (acculturation gaps). More specifically, the social control perspective is helpful in explaining how, in the absence of strong bonds to parents and the coethnic community, immigrants and their offspring gradually distance themselves from the old country (traditional) ways, which in turn, may subject them to a confusing, complex, and problematic integration process (Bui, 2009).

In terms of Latino youth, the parent-child bond seems to have special significance in determining assimilation outcomes, as studies have indicated that the strength of family ties is one of the most important elements for mediating the potential negative effects of acculturation stress, and thus, the overall assimilation experience (Bui, 2009; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2008). As youth acculturate into mainstream American institutions (e.g., school and work), they begin to adopt values and beliefs that are in direct opposition to those of their parents who, especially if they are foreign-born, are not likely to be assimilating at the same pace (Smokowski & Bacallao, 2009; Szapocznik,

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1984; Vigil, 2002). Given that acculturated youth are more likely to spend a majority of their time interacting outside of the family with peers (Vigil, 2002, 2003), they become susceptible to peer pressures and values, which can distance them from their families and diminish family or parent-child bonds (Vega, Zimmerman, Warheit, & Gil, n.d.).

Research has provided substantial empirical evidence supporting the social control framework for understanding deviance in the context of immigrant adaptation (Bui, 2009; Hwang & Wood, 2009). In particular, findings have confirmed connections between acculturation and the strength of family and school attachments across immigrant generations, and how these may prevent deviance and/or delinquency (Bui, 2009). For parent-child acculturation gaps among immigrant generations, there is a clear picture that higher levels of parent-child conflict or distancing (broken or weak bonds) are associated with poor mental health (Hwang & Wood, 2009) and negative behavioral outcomes, including deviance and delinquency (Bui, 2009; Mogro-Wilson, 2008; Morrison & James, 2009; Samaniego & Gonzales, 1999; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2009). For the influence of acculturation on school bonding, greater educational success (e.g., grades, enrollment, attachments to school, commitment to school) has been found among less acculturated Latino youth and those having bicultural identities; whereas diminished school bonding, often associated with increased delinquency, has been found among those who are more acculturated or Americanized (Bui, 2009; Altschul, et al., 2008; Hirschman, 2001).

While each of these perspectives contributes to clearer understanding of immigrant adaptation, the complexity of the assimilation process, including its divergent outcomes, may require the integration of several theoretical approaches. To

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accommodate this need, Portes and Zhou (1993) proposed their theory of segmented assimilation, which includes a model that incorporates elements from individual strain theory and social control, including the influence of peer associations on adaptation. Since segmented assimilation theory is utilized as the guiding theory in this particular study, it is discussed in more detail below.

Theory of Segmented Assimilation

The segmented assimilation perspective was introduced by Portes and Zhou (1993) to explain the challenges facing the "new" second generation children of immigrants from Asia and Latin America as they seek adaptation to American society. In contrast to the classical view, a segmented assimilation hypothesis proposes that the children of contemporary immigrants will assimilate in several ways that are largely dependent on their exposure to acculturation stress and their access to resources or social controls that mediate stress-outcomes—particularly, human and social capital. Instead of a one-size-fits-all approach to integration of the immigrant masses, this model implies a process of assimilation that is segmented into three distinct *modes of adaptation* developed based on contextual factors of the receiving culture such as government policies, values and prejudices of society, and size and structure of the coethnic communities in which immigrants settle. According to Portes and Zhou, these factors could be categorized into the following assimilation trajectories: (a) classical acculturation and integration into the White middle-class mainstream; (b) permanent poverty and "downward" assimilation into the underclass; and (c) deliberate preservation of traditional culture and its values and close ethnic ties (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

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The underlying process that determines which trajectory an individual will assimilate to involves the interplay of socioeconomic status and level of assimilation or Americanization, and a combination of strain and social control-related factors such as exposure to acculturation stress (particularly in terms of intergenerational conflicts), attachments to parents and other more traditional coethnics, access to human and social capital, perceived discrimination based on race and ethnicity, and depending on residential location, the extent of exposure to disenfranchised inner city peers. According to the theory, a classical assimilation outcome (trajectory a) is most likely to occur for individuals whose first-generation parents did not settle in the inner city or in close proximity to any U.S.-born minorities who may provide alternative (oppositional) models of adaptation. Without the influence of oppositional peers, the U.S.-born children of immigrants encounter little to no discrimination, and have considerable economic and social resources that make the transition easier. Thus, becoming Americanized is a positive (and inevitable) experience.

Segmented assimilation theory proposes that the most desirable outcome is a strategy of selective assimilation or biculturalism (trajectory c). In this trajectory, children of immigrants maintain old-country language and culture as a means of self-identification, and most importantly, as a way to communicate with their immigrant parents. Youth still absorb mainstream American culture, but the process of Americanization is slowed, ethnic pride is achieved, and parents are able to maintain some control or authority over their increasingly acculturated children (Warner, 2007). In short, strong ethnic ties to the community and a bicultural ethnic identity may be the

only means of protecting immigrant youth against assimilation into the adversarial

culture of impoverished native groups (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

The segmented assimilation hypothesis suggests the possibility that assimilation

may be a disadvantage for some immigrant youth, particularly the large number of those

living in households concentrated in urban areas, especially in the central cities

(Nagasawa, Qian, & Wong, 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993). According to the theory, these

youth in particular are subjected to downward assimilation, a trajectory that stands in

sharp contrast to classical and selective assimilation perspectives. The downward

mobility pattern is characterized by acculturation into the underclass, which places

immigrant youth at risk for a host of social problems such as dropping out of school,

premature childbearing, and involvement in crime in terms of arrest and incarceration

(Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005).

Portes and Zhou (1993) argued that there are three primary features of the social

context which contemporary immigrants encounter that predisposes them to vulnerability

for downward assimilation, including color (race), location, and the absence of human

and social capital. As noted previously, the racial and ethnic composition of the new

second generation (post-1960 immigration) varies considerably from that of descendants

of early European immigrants (Martinez & Lee, 2000; Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002). In

contrast, contemporary immigrants and their children are far more likely to be classified

as nonwhite (Portes & Zhou, 1993). In fact, the majority of U.S. Latinos identify as

multiracial or *mestizo*, a common ancestral identification in Latin America (particularly

in Mexico) that refers to persons of mixed American Indian and European ancestry

(Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002). Although length of time in the U.S. has been a

significant predictor of successful adaptation and assimilation (Gordon, 1964), skin color acts as a major barrier to integration, and the blocked opportunities resulting from racial segregation and discrimination exacerbate the risk for downward assimilation.

Another factor making some immigrant groups vulnerable to downward assimilation is their physical proximity, and hence, and social contact with others in disadvantaged neighborhoods across the U.S. The theory suggests that exposure to an oppositional or adversarial subculture in urban underclass areas leads to associations with a counterculture that subscribes to norms which often include the engagement of violence, delinquency, and crime. Associations with similarly disenfranchised peers places immigrant youth in jeopardy of stigmatization by the majority, in that they become identified in the same way as the U.S.-born poor. Consequently, in spite of the social and economic mobility of their first-generation parents, intergenerational acculturation gaps may widen as more acculturated second and third generation children become increasingly aware of discrimination directed against them and their oppressed position in the American social structure. Instead of clinging to relationships with more traditional coethnics in their communities, which may be unavailable or estranged, these youth continue to adhere to the norms and values of their underclass peers (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

The third source of vulnerability for downward assimilation pertains to the absence of social controls that mediate strain or stress-inducing assimilation experiences, particularly ethnic solidarity (social capital) and human capital (Nagasawa, Qian, & Wong, 2001; Warner, 2007). For example, research has indicated that resources available through networks in a strong coethnic community have been able to provide

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avenues of mobility through employment and other ethnic niches that provide moral and

material resources, even for low-income families and children residing in poor inner-city

areas (Nagasawa, et al., 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993). Religion or religiosity has also

been recognized as a form of social capital that plays a central protective role in

assimilation outcomes (Cao, 2005; Levitt, 2002; Warner, 2007; Zhou & Bankston, 1994).

More specifically, in the case of Latinos, bicultural and cross-generational church

programs, particularly in the Catholic Church, have been found to positively influence

ethnic pride, increase optimism in terms of mobility, and heighten parents' support for

the educational attainment of second and successive children (Levitt, 2002).

Immigrant youth lacking in education, work skills, and other sources of human

capital that facilitate economic and social mobility are also at risk for downward

assimilation. For instance, research has indicated that access to education, educational

achievement, and employment opportunities can mediate problematic assimilation

outcomes by providing incentives to upward mobility (Hirschman, 2001; Nagasawa, et

al., 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Valdez, 2006). Second-generation youth who lack

access to these resources are more likely to be exposed to the adversarial subculture, in

which they are forced to cope with their own assimilation-related difficulties (Portes &

Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997).

Prior research. In general, the literature on contemporary Asian and Latino

immigrant groups has supported an assimilation process that is not uniform for all, but

rather, one that is segmented as proposed by Portes and Zhou (1993). In their study of

the "new" second generation, Portes and Zhou (1993) found that assimilation had more to

do with economics and discrimination rather than a positive linear process where

immigrants eventually adopt the norms of the dominant culture. Portes, Parker, and

Cobas (1980) also argued that assimilation experiences differed depending on the length

of time spent in the U.S. Based on interviews with Cuban and Mexican immigrants at the

point of entry in the U.S., and again three years later, Portes and colleagues found that

increased exposure to mainstream American culture had negative effects in terms of

perceived discrimination and additional barriers to upward mobility.

     Family socioeconomic status and race appear to have a substantial, direct

influence on adaptation outcomes of immigrants and their children, often times leading to

residential segregations, permanent poverty, and exposure of immigrant children to crime

and delinquency (Zhou, 1997). The theory of segmented assimilation hypothesizes that

preservation of ethnic identity through the maintenance of traditional cultural norms and

access to human and social capital within the coethnic community insulates second and

successive generations of immigrants from downward assimilation (Portes & Zhou,

1993). Findings from several studies have indicated support for this hypothesis

(Altschul, Oyserman, & Bybee, 2008; Bankston & Zhou, 1997; Greenman & Yu Xie,

2007; Hirschman, 2001; Martinez, Lee, & Nielsen, 2004; Nagasawa & Qian, 2001;

Portes & Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997). For instance, through an examination of empirical

case studies of second-generation Haitian, Mexican, Mexican American, Punjabi Sikh,

and Caribbean (Cuban and Nicaraguan) youth, Portes and Zhou (1993) reported that the

second-generation youth most likely to experience more successful assimilation

outcomes were those who remained ensconced in their coethnic communities, thereby

embracing the cultural heritage of their parents

More recently, Altschul, Oyserman, and Bybee (2008) examined immigrant and U.S.-born Mexican American youth racial-ethnic identities in the context of an integrated theory that combined adaptation elements from segmented assimilation with those of self-schema theory. More specifically, the researchers tested the integrated model by applying assimilation trajectories to academic outcomes. They hypothesized that academic outcomes would be negatively affected by a thick in-group identity, and positively affected by a bicultural (dual) racial-ethnic identity. In collaboration with the prior research just discussed, and in support of their hypotheses, their findings indicated the positive effects of human and social capital that serve to insulate immigrant generations from assimilation into an adversarial subculture. In other words, despite exposure to extreme negative economic and physical conditions and inhospitable contexts (i.e., discrimination), individuals that exhibited bicultural ties to both in-group (country of origin) and broader society (U.S.) were more likely to have positive outcomes in terms of academic achievement.

These findings stand in sharp contrast to others that have illustrated the negative impact of socialization-integration with more acculturated/assimilated individuals and individuals outside of one's ethnic group. For instance, in their study of young Vietnamese American students, Bankston and Zhou (1997) found that association with Americanized coethnics had negative effects on social adjustment in terms of academic achievement and self-destructive behavior (use of drugs and alcohol). Furthermore, the absence of a strong coethnic community, or perhaps, severed ties to one's culture of origin is often found to produce negative outcomes. For example, in one study, drawing from ethnographic narratives of second-generation Latinos, Portes, Fernández-Kelly, and

Haller (2005) found that Latinos without sufficient family human capital and strong ties to their communities were more likely to fall behind educationally, live in poverty, and be arrested or incarcerated.

Conclusion

This review of the assimilation literature presents a complex process that challenges classical, straight-line perspectives of the assimilation process. Because of the varying cultural characteristics among more recent immigrant groups in the U.S., and the differences pertaining to the manner in which they are received by the host country, it is likely that a smooth transition to *Americanization*, as proposed by earlier models, is an outcome reserved for a small minority of groups. Research on assimilation experiences of contemporary second and successive generations of immigrant children has departed from the classical framework to some extent, particularly since findings seem to be more consistent with an assimilation process that represents segmented integration in the host society.

While the first generation is largely insulated by the effects of these conditions because of relative isolation and strong traditional family structures and cultural mores, these "strong-holds" tend to diminish among later generations, resulting in a greater risk of possible alienation from family ties, rejection of traditional cultural norms, and subsequent parent-child conflict. Consequently, acculturation among the offspring of the foreign-born may often lead to involvement in deviant subcultures which increases the likelihood of their involvement in delinquency (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

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However, a problematic assimilation outcome, or downward assimilation, is not merely a product of Americanization. Rather, the primary factors that may be used to determine downward assimilation include a combination of high Americanization, poverty, high acculturation stress or strain (particularly as a result of intergenerational acculturation gaps between parents and children), perceived discrimination based on race or ethnicity, and a relative lack of support or resources from a strong coethnic community. Accordingly, some of the variables of interest in this study were: level of assimilation (Americanization), acculturation stress (intergenerational acculturation gaps), race and ethnic subgroup, urbanization, ethnic identity, and perceptions of discrimination. These factors, and other relevant variables, are described in more detail in chapter four on methodology.

The next chapter provides a review of the literature pertaining to Latino assimilation in the U.S. and the relationship between the assimilation experience and involvement in crime or delinquency. The research questions and hypotheses developed for the instant study are also presented.

CHAPTER III

LATINO ASSIMILATION IN THE UNITED STATES

A review of the recent Latino-specific literature suggests that many Latinos in the

U.S. have a difficult time assimilating into mainstream American culture (Cofresi &

Gorman, 2004; Cornelius, 2002; Johnson, 1997; Montoya, 1997; Riviera, 1994; Suàrez-

Orozco & Pàez, 2002; Vigil, 2002). As previously discussed, the overall experience may

be dependent on generational status. Particularly, existing studies suggest that second

and third-generation bicultural children of immigrants, when compared to their first-

generation counterparts, are especially sensitive to the stressors that result from the

varying stages of assimilation/acculturation, and therefore, are at a higher risk for

developing deviant attitudes and behavior (Bankston, 1998; Bui, 2009; Buriel, Calzada,

& Vasquez, 1982; Cofresi & Gorman, 2004; Polo & López, 2009; Suárez-Orozco &

Páez, 2002; Vigil, 2002). While research on second and successive generations of

Latinos has been accumulating over recent years, much of it is cursory, and therefore,

assimilation and acculturation processes and outcomes for this particular population still

remain an understudied phenomenon.

There are several obstacles that nearly all Latino groups, regardless of

generational status, have in common in terms of the assimilation experience including

language barriers, cultural differences, and being at the receiving end of American

hostility toward the growing Latino presence in communities (Cornelius, 2002; Flippen,

2001; Montoya, 1997; Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002). In fact, public opinion polls have

indicated that Latinos are among the least favored of recent immigrant arrivals (Suárez-

Orozco & Páez, 2002). Latino Americans in general have been depicted as ignorant,

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racially and culturally inferior, and child-like (Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002). Despite the U.S. citizen status of Puerto-Ricans, this group has experienced discrimination by other Americans who consider them to be foreigners (Riviera, 1994). Further, Mexican culture has been referred to as "damaging", and has often been associated with criminality, gangs, and higher propensity to commit violent crimes (Buriel, Calzada, & Vasquez, 1982; Cornelius, 2002).

Becoming Americanized often means a conscious disassociation with one's Spanish-speaking and other cultural ties. The English-only "movement" in California is an instructive example as to this point. In 1998, a majority of California voters approved Propositions 187 and 227, which were anti-bilingual education measures. More specifically, Proposition 187 prevented undocumented Latino immigrants from receiving government benefits and public services, such as healthcare and public education; and Proposition 227 eliminated California's bilingual education program and advanced the requirement that all public education students be taught only in English. In short, members of dominant society (including substantial minorities of Latinos) sought to use the law as a means to achieve successful assimilation and homogeneity in a state heavily populated by recently arrived immigrants from Latin America (Cornelius, 2002; Martinez, 1999).

The problem with a coercive form of assimilation, such as the Propositions in California, is that it subjects Latinos to feelings of inferiority and confusion. More specifically, as they attempt to fit in to the culture of the host country (U.S.), they are forced to lose their own identity and are taught to loathe their own culture (Padilla, 2001). Padilla (2001) refers to this self-resentment as *internalized racism*. The consequence of

internalized racism is that Latinos will attempt to self-identify as white, and further, will

distance themselves from the Spanish language. Despite this distancing, Latinos cannot

change how others view them. According to Padilla:

…so long as they are viewed as Latino, they will not obtain the White privilege

they crave. Here lies the greatest risk of all, as one could lose one's ethnic and familial

identity without ever achieving one's desired identity… leaving an untethered soul who

fits in nowhere. (p. 70).

Research on school-aged Latinos has indicated that, given their higher likelihood

of integration in some of the main institutions of dominant American society (school),

self-identity crises are more likely to be faced by second and successive-generation

children of immigrants. In fact, studies showed that some of the specific challenges

young Latinos face includes isolation from mainstream peers and activities,

discrimination, and culture conflict between children and their parents (Bui, 2009;

Hwang & Wood, 2009; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2009; Williams, Alvarez, & Hauck,

2002).

As previously suggested, proficiency in English does not guarantee a less

problematic transition from Latino to American culture. Although often associated with

more positive assimilation outcomes, bilingualism has also been shown to be a source of

confusion and stress for many young Latinos (Cofresi & Gorman, 2004). The use of

Spanish while at school or work is often criticized or prohibited, and at home or in social

settings, individuals may be ridiculed by other less acculturated Latinos for using

English. Particularly, the use of English inside the home may contribute to

intergenerational conflicts between Americanized children and their more traditional

Latino parents (Ainslie, 2002; Vigil, 2002). Consequently, conflicting patterns of behavior may emerge as young Latinos struggle to relate to contradictory cultural norms (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002).

Although much of the research on Latino assimilation centers on American-perpetrated obstacles to successful integration, findings have also indicated a resistance by Latino groups to become fully Americanized. As previously discussed, many first-generation Latino immigrants, and a sizeable proportion of their descendants, have continued to maintain their native language, remained living in ethnic enclaves, and have not pursued a formal education, but rather, have networked with friends and relatives into employment within ethnic niches (Alba & Nee, 2003; Cornelius, 2002; Hurtado-Ortiz & Gauvain, 2007; Karst, 2000; Levitt, 2002; Schultz & Unipan, 2000; Stepick & Stepick, 2002; Vigil, 2002).

The literature on immigrant assimilation indicates that there is a need for further research of this issue. Although immigrants have been migrating to the United States for over two centuries, discrimination, racism, ethnocentrisms, and prejudice have continued to play a large role in Anglo-immigrant relations (Cornelius, 2002; Gordon, 1964; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Sizemore, 2004). Further, public and politically-motivated ideologies of assimilation have largely influenced the implementation of laws designed purposefully against minorities who cannot or will not fully assimilate or become Americanized (i.e. "English-only" laws in California) (Cornelius, 2002; Martinez 1999). Because of a persistent Anglo-conformity ideology and a tendency to force assimilation into American culture (primarily, through knowledge of the English language), Latino youth may become increasingly at risk for more significant problems such as conflict, violence, and

crime. For these reasons, varying levels of assimilation and how the experiences are

perceived by contemporary immigrants should be considered—particularly among Latino

groups.

Assimilation-Crime/Delinquency Relationship

Assimilation research began to take on a slightly different form in the years that

followed the classical works of Park and his students and colleagues at the University of

Chicago (Alba & Nee, 2003). Rather than focusing on the positive aspects of

Americanization through integration, scholars emphasized the significance of such

factors as social class, race, and the overall levels of acceptance of minority groups by the

dominant group in determining negative outcomes including involvement in deviance,

crime, or delinquency. In fact, some of the seminal criminological studies and resulting

theoretical developments emerged as a response to the growing concerns of immigrant

crime in the U.S. Specifically, researchers such as Sellin (1938), Shaw and McKay

(1942), Sutherland (1947), Thomas and Znaniecki (1920), Merton (1958), Cohen (1955),

and Miller (1958) took on the challenges presented by newer waves of immigrants and

the successive generations of early 20th Century European parents in terms of problematic

adjustments to White, middle-class, American society.

Midway through the 20th century, assimilation research was also extended to

include a variety of subculture theories that explained violence and delinquency as

normal or expected outcomes in the adaptation of minority groups to mainstream

American culture (e.g., Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1968). These were not assimilation

theories in the classical sense; rather, many of the theories were centered on cultural

conflicts (e.g., Sellin, 1938) and cultural deviance (e.g., Sutherland, 1947) that were

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viewed as resulting largely from the assimilation process. By and large, findings and propositions revealed a jagged path to assimilation—one that had significant influence on the crime and delinquency rates of younger, more acculturated immigrants.

As indicated by a review of the research, numerous efforts have been made to examine difficulties encountered by immigrant individuals and families as they come into contact with mainstream American culture through the process of assimilation (Polo & López, 2009). Additionally, a few studies have compared the prevalence of behavioral problems and delinquency between U.S. and foreign-born groups of different ethnicities. There are a limited number of studies, however, that have integrated these two bodies of research, and even fewer that specifically examine how the assimilation process may impact attitudes toward violence among Latinos.

Despite this limitation, recent empirical and theoretical developments pertaining to the immigration-crime/delinquency relationship have all pointed to the same general conclusion: there is something about the experiences of second and successive-generation children of immigrants that creates a level of conflict which may lead to higher rates of crime/delinquency among this group (Berry, 2005; Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Hwang & Wood, 2008; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Portes, Fernandez-Kelly & Haller 2005; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2009; Vigil, 2002; Zhou, 1997). This generalization is consistent with conventional research on European immigrants in the U.S. (Abbott, 1915; Glueck, 1937; Industrial Commission, 1901). Particularly in the case of Latinos, recent findings indicate that more assimilated individuals experience increased levels of substance abuse (Amaro, Whitaker, Coffman, & Heeren, 1990; Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Mogro-Wilson, 2008; Vega, Alderete, Kolody, & Aguilar-Gaxiola,

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2000), intimate partner violence (IPV) (Caetano, Ramisetty-Mikler, Caetano Vaeth, & Harris, 2007; Klevens, 2007; Lown & Vega, 2001; Sorenson & Telles, 1991), and other measures of self-reported delinquent behaviors including property and violent delinquency (Bui, 2009; Fridrich & Flannery, 1995; Samaniego & Gonzales, 1999).

For instance, one study of self-reported involvement in theft, drunkenness, fighting, vandalism, and drug usage among Mexican American male adolescents from the first, second, and third generation found that third-generation males had significantly higher delinquency scores than their first and second-generation counterparts (Buriel, Calzada, & Vasquez, 1982). Similarly, Bui and Thongniramol (2005) examined acculturation and delinquent behavior in a sample of 18,097 Latino and non-Latino students from various immigration generations. These authors found that first-generation Latinos were less likely than successive-generations to self-report substance abuse, property offenses, and violent delinquency. Overall, the findings indicated that immigration status had a significant impact on delinquency among this sample of Latino students, independent from effects of other social-structural and economic factors (i.e., age, sex, race, family income).

More recently, Bui (2009) tested variations in family relationships and school bonding to determine effects on generational differences in crime and delinquency among a sample of Black, Asian, and Hispanic students from grades 7 through 12 (ages 12-21). Family relationships were measured in terms of structure (i.e., living with both biological parents, one biological parent, guardians), attachment to family (closeness), parental control (in terms of curfew, clothing, etc.), and parent-child conflicts (arguments with either parent about behavior). School bonding included measures of academic

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achievement, commitment to education, and problems with studying and school in general. Delinquency was measured in terms of substance abuse, property delinquency (i.e., stealing), and violent delinquency (i.e., use of weapon, serious fight, shoot or stab someone). There were three categories for the generation status variable: first-generation (foreign-born with both foreign-born parents); second-generation (U.S.-born with at least one foreign-born parent); and, third-plus generation (American-born with both American-born parents). Various background characteristics (controls) included age, sex, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status (e.g., family income and parents' educational attainment), and community context (e.g., proportions of families living in poverty, female-headed households, and families receiving public assistance).

In collaboration with earlier studies, findings revealed that first-generation students had the lowest levels of self-reported delinquency of the three generational groups examined. Further, members of the first-generation were significantly older, had lower family incomes and parent educational attainment, and lower levels of neighborhood problems. First-generation students were also more likely to live with both biological parents, and parental controls and school attachments were higher. Multiple regression analysis indicated that parent-child conflicts and school-related troubles associated with increased levels of acculturation among second and third-plus generation students were responsible for a significant proportion of the variances in all three measures of delinquency.

Five additional studies were identified that showed the influence of higher levels of assimilation and acculturation on delinquency involvement as mediated by factors such as parental involvement, family conflict, and antisocial peer pressure (Fridrich &

Flannery, 1995; Samaniego & Gonzales, 1999; Vega, Gil, Warheit, Zimmerman, & Apospori, 1993; Vega, Khoury, Zimmerman, Gil, & Warheit, 1995; Wall, Power, & Arbona, 1993). For example, Fridrich and Flannery (1995) studied the relationship between acculturation and parental monitoring, stronger relationships with antisocial peers, and delinquency in a sample of 1,021 Mexican American and "Caucasian" or non-Mexican American students (Grades 6 and 7). Parents' generational status (foreign or U.S.-born) and whether parents spoke a language other than English were used as proxy measures of acculturation. Findings indicated that, compared to recent immigrants, the acculturated adolescents reported significantly more delinquency behaviors and lower parental monitoring. Delinquency among Mexican-American adolescents was strongly associated with acculturation status, but that this relationship was mediated by family conflict, inconsistent discipline, maternal monitoring, and negative peer hassles.

Two limitations of this study should be briefly addressed. First, the sample was confined to include Latinos of Mexican ancestry; it is possible that the assimilation/acculturation experiences of Mexican youth vary considerably from those of other Latino subgroups. Furthermore, their proxy measure of acculturation was too simplistic considering the more multidimensional models that have been advanced in recent years. Particularly, it was confined to only two dimensions—both of which were based on the acculturation of parents. According to segmented assimilation theory, an acculturation measure is not enough to gauge the entire assimilation process; rather, research should include variables that measure both assimilation levels and outcomes (trajectories). By excluding a number of key assimilation factors from the analyses, and confining the inquiry to the status of parents rather than respondents, much instructive

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information may have been lost. As previously discussed, many researchers have

recognized the importance of the role of social control and strain/anomie variables in

explaining the assimilation-deviance association, particularly because of the influence

that family, peers, ethnic identity, and negative emotions in general (e.g., anger and

frustration) have on the integration process. While empirical studies have established an

association between these variables, they often fail to explain specific factors that may

influence levels of assimilation and positive or negative outcomes of the assimilation

process (including deviance and delinquency). Those studies which have attempted to

point to key explanatory factors, particularly in the context of the U.S. Latinos, have

often focused on gang involvement and cultural predispositions for violence (e.g.,

Bankston, 1998; Buriel, Calzada, & Vasquez, 1982; Klevens, 2007; Vigil, 2002).

       One of the more familiar concepts identified within Latino culture is machismo—

a core cultural trait among Latino males that continues to strongly influence male/female

relationships. Montoya (1997) described machismo as a flattering concept used in

Hispanic culture to illuminate masculinity. In sharp contrast, the concept has also been

strongly associated with male dominance, protectiveness toward females, and violence

among Latino males (Paddock, 1975; Sanderson, Coker, Roberts, Tortolero, & Reininger,

2004). Machismo has also been linked with increased alcohol consumption, another

primary contributing factor of male-perpetrated violence, especially in terms of violence

against women (DeMente, 1996; Rivera, 1994; Sanderson, et al., 2004). The relationship

between alcohol consumption and intimate partner violence (IPV) across all ethnic

groups has been well-documented. However, among Latinos, considerable research data

have shown that many violent outbursts between Latino couples have been directly and

indirectly linked to alcohol abuse by Latino males, male dominance, and particularly, acculturation-induced role strain (challenges to gender-based norms) —a relationship that is unique to Latino populations (Caetano, et al., 2007; Klevens, 2007; Murdaugh, et al., 2004; *see* Worby & Organista, 2007, for a review of the literature). In fact, recent studies have suggested that greater acculturation may be associated with a greater prevalence of dating or intimate partner-related violence, although there is debate about the role of machismo in this relationship (Grzywacz, Rao, Gentry, Marín, & Arcury, 2009; Sanderson, Coker, Roberts, Tortolero, & Reininger, 2004; Yan, Howard, Beck, Shattuck, Hallmark-Kerr, 2009).

In this study, it was presumed that machismo would contribute to attitudes toward violence in one of two ways: (a) Less acculturated/assimilated Latino males, regardless of generational status, would be less likely to approve of violence in general, but more likely to approve of dating or intimate partner violence because of traditional gender roles (male dominance). This was predicted to be the case especially for those who witnessed violence against women inside the home and for those who consumed alcohol regularly and in excess; and, (b) More acculturated/assimilated Latino males, regardless of generational status, with high acculturation stress would be more likely than those with lower acculturation stress to approve of violence in general, including violence against an intimate partner. It should be noted that these expectations represent two extremes, as they were largely dependent on the overall assimilation experience, particularly in terms of vulnerability to poor assimilation outcomes and access to resources (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

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The extent to which Latinos as a group condone violence, or whether their attitudes toward violence differ depending on immigrant generation and other factors related to the assimilation experience, is a highly understudied area. There were only a few studies identified that specifically assessed attitudes or perceptions of violent acts or delinquency among Latinos. For example, one Chicago-based study of citizens' attitudes toward deviance focused on the extent to which structural characteristics of the neighborhood where research subjects resided could explain differences in legal cynicism, perceptions of police, and condemnation of deviance among a sample of Whites, Latinos, and Blacks (Sampson & Bartusch, 1998). Latinos were significantly more likely than European Americans to oppose fighting and reported much less tolerance for deviance. In fact, in comparison to Blacks and Whites in the sample, Latinos were the most intolerant group. Sampson and Bartusch also found that both stable and predominantly Latino immigrant neighborhoods were even more intolerant of fighting.

Funk, Elliott, Urman, Flores, and Mock (1999) conducted a study to assess the impact of a violence intervention program on the endorsement of pro-violent attitudes among a sample of African American, European American, and Hispanic American adolescents in Ohio. Their survey instrument consisted of a 15-item scale developed specifically to measure attitudes toward violence among adolescents. More specifically, the questionnaire included statements involving possible responses to violence (e.g., "I could see myself joining a gang" and "It's okay to use violence to get what you want"), and participants were asked to respond to each statement based on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Upon conducting factor analysis, the

researchers found that a two-factor solution was superior, and therefore, statements on the attitude scale were divided into two separate groups: Culture of violence (violence as a valued activity) and reactive violence (violence as a response to actual or perceived threats). Contrary to the study conducted by Sampson and Bartusch (1998), their findings revealed that Hispanic Americans endorsed cultural violence items at a level slightly higher than their African American and White counterparts, in spite of the fact that they only represented about 5% of the sample. African Americans were found to endorse reactive violence items at the highest level of all three groups.

In sharp contrast to the body of research that shows more conflict experienced and a greater involvement in crime and delinquency among second and successive generations of immigrants in the U.S., one study was identified that found a cultural acceptance of violence among a sample of Latin-Americans living in Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Venezuela, and Spain. Specifically, Briceño-León, Camardiel, and Avila (2006) found an acceptance of violence under certain circumstances, particularly the right to kill. In short, the questions pertaining to acceptance of violence were designed to measure two things—support for killing in defense of one's family and support for killing in defense of one's property. The right to kill to defend one's family—specifically, as a response to the rape of a daughter—received the most support.

It is important to note that respondents' approval of violence was contextual, in that findings reflected the highest levels of approval for violence committed against persons who offended a family member. However, this finding did not reflect an overall approval of violence under all circumstances, and may be related to traditional beliefs of

familism, respect, and machismo. Further, there appeared to be a linkage between heavy

alcohol consumption and pro-violent attitudes—again, reflecting the possibility that

machismo may play a role in acceptance of violence among more traditional Latino-

Americans.

Summary

Based on a review of this body of research, it is possible to argue that assimilation

is a stressful process that, in some way, may be related to the risk of crime and

delinquency of Latinos living in the United States. As has been suggested by the data,

this relationship is largely dependent upon generational status, with more acculturated

second or successive-generations of Latinos reporting more involvement in delinquency.

Although the assimilation-crime relationship appears to be mediated by other factors,

such as family conflict, parental monitoring, alcohol consumption, and a host of other

structural variables, there is something critical about the overall assimilation experience

that stimulates these factors and exacerbates problematic social conditions.

Although there have been perception studies conducted seeking to understand

how Latinos view U.S. society and how their perceptions change depending on the length

of time in the U.S. (Portes, Parker & Cobas, 1980; Shultz & Unipan, 2000), there is an

absence of studies that specifically examine the relationship between these perceptions

and general attitudes toward violence. Because of this gap in the literature, it would seem

that in-depth research with contemporary Latino populations is needed to advance an

understanding of this relationship. This study sought to move beyond theory and

speculation so that the appropriate target could be identified and intervention can occur.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The U.S. Latino population is an important group to be researched not only because of its growth but also because of specific factors putting them at a high risk for involvement in crime and violence, especially factors experienced by relatively young U.S.-born Latino males (Rodriguez & Brindis, 1995). The theoretical framework that guided the research questions in this study was segmented assimilation, as proposed by Portes and Zhou (1993). Under this framework, the instant study explored an attitudinal foundation for violence that may be associated with the process of assimilation among contemporary male Latinos of second and successive-generations.

To accomplish its objective, Latino males between the ages of 18 and 25 were surveyed regarding the extent to which they endorse pro-violent attitudes (interpersonal violence and weapon carrying) and their overall assimilation into mainstream American culture. Special attention was paid to factors that may have impacted the assimilation-violence relationship, including the extent to which participants had experienced acculturation stress or strain. One of the main assumptions in this study was that the process of assimilation or Americanization may lead to a greater overall acceptance of violence among Latinos living in the U.S.—a relationship that is largely influenced by the segmented nature of the assimilation experience.

Although research on the perceptions of Latinos both inside and outside of the U.S. has been conducted, knowledge specific to the connection between the assimilation experience and acceptance of violence is still limited for two primary reasons. First and foremost, earlier criminological studies have relied largely on official records to determine the extent to which Latinos are involved in crime or delinquency, and these

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records are often inaccurate and prejudicial against immigrants and other ethnic minorities (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005). Second, past research on U.S. Latinos has often failed to consider distinctions between immigration generations, Latino subgroups (ethnic origin or country of origin), and race (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Martinez, 2002; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Montoya, 1997; Suàrez-Orozco and Pàez, 2002). The currently study attempted to address these limitations.

In short, this study used the assimilation perspective, specifically, segmented assimilation theory, as a guide to develop the research questions and to explain the relationship between assimilation and acceptance of violence among second and successive generations of Latino males. Through an examination of self-reported socio-demographic, cultural, and structural characteristics, assimilation levels, and cultural attitudes or acceptance of violence among Latino males and the differences between them on several key variables, the present study sought to answer the following research questions: 1) To what extent do Latinos support the use of violence, and does this differ depending on their *level* of assimilation?; 2). Does the assimilation-violence relationship differ depending on the *type* of assimilation?; and, 3). Is the assimilation-violence relationship consistent across a number of demographic and cultural characteristics? On the basis of prior literature, the above research questions, and the purpose of this study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Attitudes toward Violence: Level of Assimilation

$H_a(1)$: Latino males with higher levels of assimilation are more likely to approve of violence than less assimilated Latino males.

Attitudes toward Violence: Segmented Assimilation Theory

$H_a(2)$: Regardless of assimilation level, Latinos who experience high acculturation stress are more likely to support the use of violence than Latinos who experience low acculturation stress.

$H_a(3)$: Non-White Latinos are more likely to support the use of violence than White Latinos.

$H_a(4)$: Latinos living in low income households are more likely than Latinos living in higher income households to support the use of violence.

$H_a(5)$: Low-income Latinos living in central city or metropolitan areas are more likely to support the use of violence than high-income Latinos or Latinos living in suburban or rural areas.

$H_a(6)$: Latinos who have lower levels of educational attainment are more likely to support the use of violence than Latinos having higher levels of educational attainment.

$H_a(7)$: Unemployed Latinos are more likely than employed Latinos to support the use of violence.

$H_a(8)$: Latino males who are non-religious or less devoted to their religious beliefs are more likely to approve of violence than Latino males who indicate a strong religious affiliation and devotion.

$H_a(9)$: Latino males living in neighborhoods with little to no coethnic representation are more likely to support the use of violence than Latino males living in strong coethnic communities.

H$_a$(10): Latino males who do not maintain close relationships with Latino peers and relatives are more likely to support the use of violence than Latino males who do maintain these relationships.

H$_a$(11): Latino males who perceive that they are discriminated against and not accepted by U.S. society are more likely to approve of violence.

Attitudes toward Violence: Cultural and Demographic Characteristics

H$_a$(12): The assimilation-violence relationship will be mediated by age; particularly, younger Latino males are more likely to support the use of violence than older Latino males.

H$_a$(13): The assimilation-violence relationship will be mediated by marital status; particularly, widowed, divorced, separated, and never married Latinos are more likely to support the use of violence than Latino males who are currently married.

H$_a$(14): U.S.-born Latino males are more likely to support the use of violence than foreign-born Latino males.

H$_a$(15): The assimilation-violence relationship will be mediated by alcohol consumption; particularly, Latino males who consume excessive amounts of alcohol on a regular basis are more likely to support the use of violence than Latino males with little to no alcohol usage.

H$_a$(16): The assimilation-violence relationship will be mediated by exposure to alcohol-related violence; particularly, Latino males who report being recently exposed to violence are more likely to support the use of violence than Latino males with no recent exposure.

H$_a$(17): The assimilation-violence relationship will be mediated by machismo; particularly, regardless of generational status and level of assimilation, Latino males who subscribe to traditional gender roles that support male dominance over women are more likely to support the use of violence, specifically intimate partner violence.

Based on a review of the literature, it is possible to conclude that assimilation can result in increased conflict and problematic outcomes among ethnic and racial minorities. Whether the conflict experienced by this group actually results in an increased acceptance of violence remains to be established. The following chapter describes the methodology and operational measures which were necessary to identify and analyze the data. The statistical procedures that were utilized in the final analyses are also explained.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

To address the hypotheses in the preceding chapter, an internet-based survey

methodology was used to obtain data largely from second and successive-generations of

Latino males who frequent a popular social networking site. The use of a survey allowed

for an in-depth examination of whether Latino males differ in terms of their attitudes

toward violence—differences that may be present because of an assimilation process

largely determined by key social, cultural, and demographic characteristics and access to

social and human capital. This examination was important and necessary as some of the

challenges faced by today's immigrants and their children render them particularly

susceptible to involvement in violence and crime.

The use of an internet-based survey was appropriate given that Latinos are a hard

to reach population. At the time this research was conducted, there was no adequate

sampling frame that contained a substantial number of young adult second and successive

generation Latino males who were demographically and socially diverse. Although this

survey methodology ultimately limited the generalizability of the results, the depth of the

information that was collected from this typically hard-to-reach population is invaluable.

The survey contained four main components: (a) a 25-item questionnaire to assess

various social, cultural, and demographic characteristics (e.g., income, gender roles,

alcohol use, family context) (b) an attitudes toward violence scale; (c) a bicultural

stressors scale; and (d) an assimilation component which was compatible with prior

surveys assessing the level of Latino assimilation in the U.S. The following section

provides more detail on the methodology.

<div align="center">**Sample**</div>

Geographic Location

   An internet-based survey was used to obtain a cross-country sample of Latinos living in the U.S. There were two reasons for selecting this approach. First, given time and financial constraints associated with instant study and limited access to a sampling frame that contained individuals from the population of interest (second and successive generation Latino males), the instant research did not permit the use of a large-scale probability sample. Consequently, in an attempt to obtain an adequate sample size for the purposes of this study, a cross-national convenience sample was utilized. Second, Latinos are a diversified group, particularly in terms of race and country of origin (ethnic subgroup) (Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002). According to the theoretical framework guiding this study, these characteristics often determine the location where Latino families settle and the type of reception they receive by dominant society. In short, the interplay of all these factors, but particularly residential location, is likely to affect the assimilation experience (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

   In conducting a review of the literature pertaining to Latinos, there appeared to be an emphasis on Latino populations living in specific regions (e.g., s*ee* Alvarez, Nalla, & Bachman, 1999 [Arizona]; Brown & Benedict, 2004 [Texas]; Lee, Martinez, & Rodriguez, 2000 [Florida and Texas]; Lee, Martinez, & Rosenfeld, 2001 [Florida, Texas, and California]; Lopez & O'Donnell Brummett, 2003 [California]; Martinez & Lee, 2000 [Florida, California, and Texas]; Menjivar & Bejarano, 2004 [Arizona]). Consequently, there is an absence of geographic variation in terms of Latino populations located in the Northeast region of the United States. Thus, one way to potentially capture this diversity

was by sampling a sufficient cross-section of Latino males that were geographically varied.

Sample Selection and Exclusions

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2006), an estimated 44.3 million persons of Hispanic or Latino origin were living in the United States as of July 1, 2006. Information pertaining to country of origin reflected that Mexicans and Puerto Ricans were the two largest subgroups, accounting for 64% and 9% of the total Hispanic or Latino total population, respectively. The remaining subgroups were divided as follows (in descending order): Cuban; Dominican (Dominican Republic); Central American (Costa Rican, Guatemalan, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Panamanian, Salvadorian, and other Central American); South American (Argentinean, Bolivian, Chilean, Columbian, Ecuadorian, Paraguayan, Peruvian, Uruguayan, Venezuelan, and other South American); and, Other Hispanic or Latino (Spanish, Spaniard, Spanish American, and all other Spanish or Latino). Given this wide variation, the sample for the instant study consisted of Latino males (of any race) between the ages of 18 and 25 from all available Latino subgroups. The primary reason Latinos of this particular age group were chosen for inclusion in this study is because prior research has found them to exhibit higher rates of violence (particularly homicide) (Alvarez, et al., 1999; Martinez, 2002; Sorenson & Lew, 2000; Vigil, 2002).

There were two primary reasons for the exclusion of women. First, as is explained in the literature (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Williams, Alvarez & Hauck, 2002), the process of assimilation is different for Latinas. More specifically, the Latina struggle with assimilation appears to be more closely related to the fulfillment of gender

roles based on traditions or customs, and the conflicts resulting from these gendered role expectations. Second, and perhaps most important for the purposes of this study, is the presumption that Latinas are relatively uninvolved in violence and criminal or delinquent behavior compared to their male counterparts. Given the differences between men and women more generally, and the complexities associated with Latina-specific violence and victimization in the context of machismo (male domination) and changing gender roles as a result of acculturation, the researcher would suggest that Latinas should be studied as a separate group.

Sample Design and Recruitment

Because it was presumed that Latinos are a hard to reach population for several reasons discussed below (see *Strengths and Limitations of Methods*), an availability (convenience) non-probability sampling strategy was employed in this study (Bachman & Schutt, 2007). The initial sample was obtained through the use of an online social networking site which specifically catered to Latino populations living within the United States. The specific site, *MySpace Latino*, was chosen for this study because of problems with access to this population, time limitations, and most importantly, financial constraints.

MySpace, a division of News Corporation which is owned by Fox Interactive Media, is a global social networking web site based in Los Angeles that connects individuals through varied technology including personal profiles, videos, music, photos, mobile, messaging, and games. *MySpace* users create unique profiles that are used primarily to establish and maintain a network of friends. Although everyone is welcome to join, new membership requires registration and the subsequent creation of a profile that

contains self-descriptive information pertaining to demographics, interests, and photos (Valkenburg, Peter, & Schouten, 2006). Friend networking sites such as *MySpace* have become increasingly popular among adolescents and young adults (Goodings, Locke, & Brown, 2007; Magnuson & Dundes, 2008; Thelwall, n.d.).

Originally launched in 2004, *MySpace* has become one of largest social networks in North America (Lairet, 2008. The site has reported its current active membership base to be at about 130 million users, 70 million of whom are U.S.-based (http://www.myspace.com/pressroom?url=/fact+sheet/). According to quantcast.com, a web-based audience insights service, *MySpace* caters to an audience that is comprised largely of young adults ranging between the ages of 13-17 (26%) and 18-34 (46%). In an effort to reach out to the growing young U.S. Latino market, *MySpace Latino* was launched in 2008. While its features are similar to that of the mainstream site in terms of networking technologies and multimedia sharing (music, video, photos), it is geared toward bilingual users (providing English or Spanish versions) and focuses on the interests and needs of the U.S. Latino populations—particularly in terms of its advertisements. *MySpace* representatives have estimated that there are about 9.7 million Latino members, making it the largest Latino-based social networking site in the U.S. (http://www.hispanicmpr.com/tag/myspace/; Lairet, 2008).

The researcher attempted to gain formal access to *MySpace* members through a series of emails and letters mailed to contacts obtained from the main website, myspace.com. After receiving no formal response, the researcher obtained a copy of the

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terms of use[2] and privacy policy[3] directly from the website. Upon review of this information, the researcher found nothing pertaining to restrictions of use for the purposes of this study. The information was then submitted to key members of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Indiana University of Pennsylvania for review.

Although this method of recruitment limited the sample to internet-using Latino males, given the nature of the phenomenon under study (assimilation), the best way to reach the target population was to select a social networking site whose members represented the demographic of interest in terms of ethnicity (Hispanic or Latino), age (18-25), and generational status (second and successive generation). Further, *MySpace Latino* included content in both English and Spanish, and therefore, it was presumed that there would be a significant number of bilingual or Spanish-speaking only Latinos in the sample. This is an essential characteristic in that language use has been found to significantly affect Latino assimilation trajectories according to the segmented assimilation framework (Portes & Zhou, 1993).

Potential respondents for this study were obtained using a multi-step process. Sometime at the end of the fall semester 2009, the researcher worked alongside a bilingual interpreter to create a *MySpace* account by constructing a web page (profile) in *MySpace Latino* that included an advertisement, in both English and Spanish, that asked individuals to participate in an online survey for this study (*See* Appendix A). The web page consisted of the researcher's name, affiliation (Indiana University of Pennsylvania,

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[2] http://www.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=misc.terms

[3] http://www.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=misc.privacy

Department of Criminology), some general background information about the researcher (e.g., education, research interests), and a brief description of the study including contact information for any questions or concerns potential respondents had about the research or survey.

The researcher anticipated that potential respondents would be obtained in one of two ways: (a) unsolicited individuals meeting the criteria may encounter the researcher's webpage and link directly to the survey; and (b) individuals meeting the criteria who the researcher actively seeks out for participation. Active recruitment was accomplished through a series of steps. Once the account had been created, the researcher conducted an online search over the course of about one week. Using the site's search parameters, the researcher sought out Latino male members who met the age specifications as described previously (18-25). Next, each profile was scanned to ensure that the following additional specifications were met: (a) the profile is for an individual, rather than a group, organization, or cause (e.g., bands, environmental), (b) the account has been actively used or accessed within the previous three months, and, (c) the member is geographically located in the U.S.

Each time a member meeting these specifications was identified, a "friend request" was initiated so that individual members may be directed toward the researcher's main profile. After the required number of members had been accumulated or confirmed, the researcher posted a bulletin which led them directly to her profile, and hence, the direct link to the survey. Additional information about survey administration and the strengths and weaknesses associated with the use of internet-based surveys are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Sample Size

Cohen's (1988) statistical power analysis equation was utilized as a guide to determine the minimum number of people required in the sample for this particular study. Given the nature of the model, particularly the inclusion of ten independent variables and multiple control factors, Cohen suggests using the following equation to determine sample size:

$$N = \frac{\lambda}{f^2} + w$$

where N represents the number of cases necessary to make statistical inferences, λ (lambda) is the value of the noncentrality parameter of the noncentral F distribution, f^2 is the effect size, and w refers to the number of variables that require control (e.g., ancestry, machismo). This researcher determined the appropriate value of lambda by referring to lambda tables for an F distribution provided by Cohen (p. 452). Three items are necessary in order to obtain the lambda value: the number of independent variables (u), the degrees of freedom for error variance (v), and the desired power.

The lambda (λ) for 10 independent variables (level of assimilation, acculturation stress, and several theoretical constructs used in this study) was used. Degrees of freedom for error variance are the power entries for each value for each independent variable (u = 10). For the degrees of freedom for error variance, the choices are 20, 60, 120 and infinity. Cohen's recommendation is to use 120, as it is a more conservative measure (v = 120). With respect to the power value (i.e., the likelihood that a researcher will find a significant difference), Cohen suggests the use of 0.80 for behavioral science research. Furthermore, in terms of effect size for a model that has not been analyzed previously,

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Cohen also recommends using an f^2 of .15 for a medium effect size and an f^2 of .02 for a small effect size (Cohen, 1988, p. 413).

Based on the above specifications, a lambda (λ) value of 24.4 was obtained from Cohen's multiple regression sample size table with an alpha of .05 (p. 452). A total of w = 22 variables were ultimately included as control variables in the multiple regression model. This resulted in sample sizes of 185 for a medium effect size and 1242 for a small effect size.

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Research Design

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Cross-Sectional Design

For the purposes of this study, the researcher employed a cross-sectional research design. According to Menard's (2002) discussion of the differences between longitudinal and cross-sectional research, there are two primary reasons why cross-sectional design is preferable in this case. First, longitudinal research is both time intensive and expensive. This researcher was interested in, one, minimizing the amount of time needed to conduct this research, and two, keeping the costs associated with this project to a minimal level, cross-sectional design was preferable. Second, longitudinal research is best used when the researcher is interested in examining *change in patterns that occur with age over time*. Since this study was designed to examine the differences between Latino males of different ages with respect to patterns of relationships between level of assimilation and attitudes toward violence *at one particular time*, longitudinal analysis was not necessary.

Furthermore, this study was interested in Latinos' current perceptions regarding their experiences in the U.S. This inquiry (and the results) was especially timely

considering the more recent restrictions on Latino migration and U.S.-Latino relations. The following sections present the survey method and administration, key variables, survey construction, reliability, validity, human subject protections, and data analysis plan.

Survey Methodology

Because of the problematic nature in accessing Latino populations, researchers have often relied on official records and secondary data analysis to examine relationships between Latinos and violence (Alvarez, et al., 1999; Lee, et al., 2000; Lee, et al., 2001; Martinez, 2000; Martinez, 2002; Martinez & Lee, 2000). Although this method has been acceptable, especially considering the gap in the literature for this ethnic group, it has also been a major limitation because most official reports do not contain enough information specific to ethnicity and ethnic groups to fully examine the particular factors of interest. Given the research questions in the instant study, it is argued that a survey method specifically designed to measure demographic factors, assimilation levels, and cultural attitudes (norms) toward violence was the most appropriate methodology.

As stated earlier, this study used internet-based surveys as its sole method of data collection. The use of the internet as a method of data collection has dramatically increased over the past decade. In fact, the internet is now a central aspect of daily communication and responsibilities for many individuals. Further, email has become the preferred method for communicating with others (Dillman, et al., 2009). While gaining in popularity in recent years, internet-based surveys have not replaced print or telephone surveying methods completely given some important limitations. Particularly, in terms of research on the general population, more traditional telephone and mail surveys

generally garner more representative samples of large populations of individuals than do web-based surveys. The primary reasons for this include limited or no access to a computer (internet), no knowledge of or access to email accounts, and lack of computer skills among some segments of the population (Dillman, et al., 2009).

According to Dillman, et al. (2009), access and computer knowledge has much improved in recent years. In fact, the majority of U.S. households now have access to the internet (Dillman, et al., 2009). With respect to U.S. Latinos, recent reports have indicated that the percentage of online adults has increased since 2001 (56% in 2006) (del Valle, 2007). Still, when conducting research with internet-using using populations, consideration should be given to the fact that individuals with internet access differ from those without on several key characteristics such as race, ethnicity, education, and income (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009; DiNitto; Busch-Armendariz, Bender, Woo, Gibson, & Dyer, 2008). Such differences are particularly noteworthy with respect to the demographics of internet-using U.S. Latinos, as the demographics of this particular population result in a limited ability to generalize findings. More specifically, recent findings have suggested that this population skews heavily toward English-dominant or bilingual individuals, Latinos with higher educational attainment, and upper-income (del Valle, 2007). On the positive side, particularly for the purposes of this study, the majority of Latino internet users are also younger (over two thirds of online Latinos are between the ages of 18 and 29) and U.S.-born (del Valle, 2007).

Another issue pertaining to online research more generally is that web surveys often produce lower response rates than more traditional methods (Dillman, et al., 2009). It should be noted, however, that response rates seem to be dropping for all types of

surveys. To encourage participation, Dillman, et al. (2009) suggested using several

techniques including the provision of token financial incentives, information about the

survey and how results will benefit participants, appeals to helping tendencies by asking

for advice or help, and appeals to the values of the target group. Most of these

techniques, and others, were utilized throughout the current study to the extent possible

and are discussed in more detail below.

Despite the stated limitations, there are several reasons why a web-based survey is

often considered the preferred method of data collection in general research, and most

importantly, in the instant study. First, as previously stated, web surveys are the most

cost effective of all surveying techniques. Given the financial constraints associated with

this research, this was of primary importance to the researcher. Second, the software

technology used to create and implement web-based surveys facilitates a relatively easy

process that involves less time than traditional paper surveys on a number of counts.

Once the survey is launched, it can be completed very quickly by large numbers of

people and at a low cost. Furthermore, after the specified number of surveys has been

completed, results are immediately released for analysis—another time-saving factor

(Dillman, et al., 2009).

Third, as suggested earlier, for reasons of limited access to U.S. Latino

populations (particularly Latinos in the researcher's geographic location), it is necessary

to find an alternate method of capturing the variability of this dynamic group. Since

research has indicated that a considerable proportion of young Latinos are currently

online (del Valle, 2007), and particularly, are frequenting social networking sites such as

MySpace Latino (McCarthy, 2008), it was expected that online web surveying could be

used to describe some of the characteristics of the instant sample and to explore

relationships between assimilation and attitudes toward violence for this particular

sample of Latino males.

One final and particularly salient benefit of using a web-based survey in this

study is the ease of providing access to both Spanish and English versions of the survey

to respondents. Qualtrics, the survey software that was utilized in this study, has a

feature that translates the instructive text, survey questions, and accompanying branches

into Spanish. Furthermore, it allows respondents to choose which language they prefer

and provides the researcher with the ability to see the English and Spanish versions of the

questions side by side (http://www.qualtrics.com/blog/survey-translation/). Although the

Spanish translation was checked for accuracy, this translation feature saved considerable

time and costs typically associated with survey construction and administration.

According to Dillman, et al. (2009), two important features to consider in the

construction of web-based surveys are the visual design and layout of questions. Thus, to

maximize response rates and to ensure that each respondent receives, processes, and

navigates each question in the same way, they propose several guidelines for designing a

web questionnaire—five of which were considered in the proposed study.

The first and most important guideline includes the number and arrangement of

questions presented on each web page. Dillman et al. discussed the benefits and

limitations of three formats for presenting questions: presenting all of the questions on

one page, presenting each question on its own page, and grouping multiple related

questions across multiple pages. According to Dillman et al., the multiple questions per

page format is appropriate for surveys that are longer and include questions that can be

grouped. Thus, given the number of questions included in the instant survey (98), and that many of the questions are related, this was the format that was utilized in the instant study.

The second guideline considered in the proposed study included the construction of visually appealing welcome and closing screens. According to Dillman et al. (2009), the opening screen serves two main purposes: it helps orient respondents by providing a description of the survey and instructions on how to proceed and it encourages undecided respondents to either commit to taking the survey or decide against it. Thus, it was essential that the screen was appealing in terms of clarity and amiability while communicating the necessary information including the title of the survey ("Latinos Living in the U.S."), a brief description of the purpose of the study, instructions, participants' rights (informed consent), and contact information should respondents had any questions. To encourage participation, the welcome page included a photo carefully selected based on their appeal to the target population. The informative welcome also included the researcher's affiliation (Indiana University of Pennsylvania) and the incorporation of vibrant colored graphics, which have been found to appeal to Latino consumers (http://www.allbusiness.com/marketing-advertising/branding-brand-development/700716-1.html). Based on suggestions from Dillman et al., the closing screen was also written in a friendly and professional tone and indicated respondents' completion of the survey and expressed gratitude for their efforts. Additionally, the closing screen had a blank space in which respondents were encouraged to type in any additional thoughts or concerns that emerged while taking the survey.

According to Dillman et al., another way to encourage participation is to design a screen format that emphasizes the respondent rather than the sponsor throughout the questionnaire. Similar to the welcome screen previously discussed, pages should be designed so that they are appealing and interesting to respondents. For example, the title of this study "Latino Attitudes Toward Violence: The Effect of Americanization", focused more on the researcher's needs and the purposes of the study rather than the respondents. To maintain respondents' interest throughout the questionnaire, the survey used in the instant study incorporated examples presented by Dillman et al, such as repeating the title of the survey on each page of the questionnaire, and by incorporating images and graphics that were appealing and familiar to this study's target population (e.g., colorful and bold letters or images).

To aid respondents in organizing and processing the information on each page of the survey so that they can easily move through individual screens in the questionnaire, the researcher used a consistent page layout across screens. Particularly, each screen (including the welcome and closing screens) had the same background colors, contours, and lines. Further, survey questions were grouped in a consistent page layout that included two distinct segments or regions: a header or banner, including the name of the university and the survey title as well as a smaller version of the graphic displayed on the welcome screen; and, the main question area, which included the question stem, any instructions, and the answer choices. It should be noted that every question in the survey was visually consistent; meaning that question numbering, font size and color, spacing, and other formatting (grouping and subgrouping of questions and

responses, indentation, and bolding) remained consistent to minimize confusion and help respondents to easily locate necessary information.

In addition to the five guidelines for web survey design just discussed, consideration was also given to construction of question response categories. In creating the survey items, this researcher followed Dillman's (2007) suggestions with respect to question structure, particularly in terms of keeping the scales simple by minimizing number of response categories and paying special attention to the placement of the "undecided" category. Regarding possible responses, the survey included a mix of ordered (scalar) and unordered response categories. Further, because English might have been a second language for many of the respondents, the researcher was careful to consider how the use of complex scaling may affect response rates, and therefore, efforts were made to keep the questions and response categories relatively simple and specific.

The following section presents the dependent, independent, and control variables, as well as the survey items that were used to measure the variables. Reliability and validity of borrowed survey instruments are also discussed.

Key Variables

The survey items for this study were designed to examine the influence of assimilation on attitudes toward violence. According to the research, there are many factors influencing the Latino assimilation experience including demographic and cultural characteristics, acculturation stress, and access to social and human capital. Therefore, to answer the research questions proposed in this study, the concepts within the research questions were identified and operationalized into one dependent variable (attitudes toward violence) and a number of independent variables designed to measure

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assimilation level and type, including measures of acculturation stress (strain) and social

control. Demographic and cultural concepts such as age, machismo, nativity, and alcohol

use were included to provide both descriptive information about the sample and to serve

as control variables.   The purpose of this section is to introduce the key variables and to

briefly discuss their operational definitions.

Dependent Variable

Interpersonal violence is defined as violence between intimate partners and

family members and violence between acquaintances and strangers (Waters, Hyder,

Rajkotia, Basu, Rehwinkel, & Butchart, 2004). Violence may include the use of verbal

and/or physical aggression (e.g., hitting) or other actions or behaviors that may result in

the injury of another person or persons. For the purposes of this study, the dependent

variable, attitudes toward violence, referred to an individual's acceptance of interpersonal

violence in general, between males and females and intimates, and extreme violent

methods (weapon carrying) (Naevdal, 2004). Thus, self-inflicted violence, state-

sponsored violence, war, and other forms of collective violence were excluded from this

study.

Research has indicated that, as a group, Latino Americans are at a high risk for

exposure to and involvement in a range of violent experiences (as victims and offenders)

(Rodriguez & Brindis, 1995; Sampson, Morenoff, & Raudenbush, 2005; Sanderson, et

al., 2004; Yan, Howard, Beck, Shattuck, & Hallmark-Kerr, 2009). However, as

previously noted, research on Latino violence is still rather scant compared to that of

other groups, especially research that is focused on attitudes. Although researchers

typically use attitudes as a valid proxy for actual behaviors that cannot be directly

observed (such as violent behavior), the construct is an essential component of research—particularly considering that attitudes toward violence have a significant effect on the prevalence of violent behaviors (Funk, Elliott, Urman, Flores, & Mock, 1999; Markowitz, 2001; Naevdal, 2004).

For this study, violent attitudes were measured based on a series of statements that assessed the respondents' approval of various violent behaviors or actions and weapon carrying (Table 1). More specifically, 14 items of general interpersonal peer violence, 3 items of male-on-female violence, and 5 items of general intimate partner violence (defined as wife, girlfriend, ex-wife, ex-girlfriend, and common-law wife) were used to construct a composite measure of attitudes toward violence. The composite scale was created by summing self-reported attitudes toward violence on all items. The attitudes toward violence scale potentially ranged from 22 (for a respondent who strongly disagreed with all items) to 88 (for a respondent who strongly agreed with each statement).

Table 1

Attitudes Toward Violence Scale

General Interpersonal Violence:

(1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Agree; 4= Strongly Agree)

1.	It's okay to use a weapon when fighting.	1 - 4
2.	I could see myself joining a gang.	1 - 4
3.	It's okay to use violence to get what you want.	1- 4
4.	I try to stay away from places where violence is likely.*	1 - 4
5.	People who use violence get respect.	1 - 4
6.	Carrying a gun or knife would help me feel safer.	1 - 4
7.	If a person hits you, you should hit them back.	1 - 4
8.	It's okay to beat up a person for badmouthing me or my family.	1 - 4
9.	It's okay to carry a gun or knife if you live in a rough neighborhood.	1 - 4
10.	It's okay to do whatever it takes to protect myself.	1 - 4
11.	It's good to carry a gun with you at all times.	1 - 4
12.	Parents should tell their children to use violence if necessary.	1 - 4

13. If someone tries to start a fight with you, you should walk away.*   1 - 4
14. I'm afraid of getting hurt by violence. *   1 - 4

<u>Acceptance of Male on Female Violence:</u>

(1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Agree; 4= Strongly Agree)

1. It's OK to hit a woman to get her to do what I want.   1 - 4
2. Most women like to be pushed around by men.   1 - 4
3. The male should <u>not </u>allow the female the same amount of freedom he has.   1 - 4

<u>Acceptance of General Intimate Partner Violence:</u>

(1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Agree; 4= Strongly Agree)

1. Violence between intimate partners can improve the relationship.   1 - 4
2. There are times when violence between intimate partners is okay.   1 - 4
3. Sometimes violence is the only way to express your feelings.   1 - 4
4. Some couples must use violence to solve their problems.   1 - 4
5. Violence between intimate partners is a personal matter and people should <u>not</u> interfere.   1 - 4

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* Denotes items that are reverse scored.

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements ranging from an acceptance of violence as a means of gaining respect to their own involvement in a criminal gang. Although the survey items included measures of the respondent's own use of violence, it should be emphasized that use was not the construct of interest. Rather, this study sought to examine the extent to which the respondents supported the use of violence, regardless of whether they participated or intended to participate in it directly. The subscales used in this composite measure are discussed in more detail below.

The first scale of items included in this study's composite measure of pro-violence was a combination of borrowed items from two scales previously designed to

measure attitudes toward violence. Particularly, this study used a modified version

consisting of 1 item borrowed from a revised version of the *Velicer Attitudes Toward*

Violence Scale (Anderson, Benjamin, Wood, & Bonacci, 2006) and 13 items (1 modified)

used by Funk, Elliott, Urman, Flores, and Mock (1999) to assess a general tendency to

approve of pro-violent attitudes among a sample of inner city high-school juniors and

seniors, 5% of whom were Hispanic Americans (*Attitudes Towards Violence Scale*).

Funk et al. (1999) reported good internal consistency for the modified scale (Cronbach's

alpha = .86). As previously stated, all 14 items were added to the composite attitudes

toward violence scale and summed together, along with the following subscales, to

determine an overall violence score for each respondent.

The remaining eight items included in this study's composite violence scale

consisted of one original item, one borrowed item from the revised Velicer Attitudes

Toward Violence Scale discussed above (Anderson, et al., 2006), and six items that were

taken and adapted from two subscales that are part of a larger scale used by Foshee,

Fothergill, and Stuart (1992) to measure acceptance of couple violence among 8th and 9th

grade students. As previously discussed, the two subscales were originally designed to

measure acceptance of male-on-female violence (internal consistency = .74) and

acceptance of general dating violence (internal consistency = .73). The male-on-female

violence subscale contained three items designed to measure the extent to which

respondents agreed or disagreed with statements pertaining to a "boy's" use of violence

(particularly hitting) against a "girl". For the purpose of this study, these statements were

modified in consideration of the target population under study (Latino males between the

ages of 18-25). Particularly, use of the term "boy" or "girl" and "girlfriend" were

replaced with "man" or "woman" and "intimate partner" (including a definition of intimate partner). The acceptance of general dating violence subscale contained five items designed to measure the extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed with statements pertaining to the use of general violence in dating relationships. These items were slightly modified to replace "dating partners" with "intimate partners".

As discussed in the preceding section, likert-type responses from all survey items designed to measure violent attitudes were combined to form a composite measure of pro-violent attitudes. A high score on the attitudes scale indicated agreement with pro-violent values. Because all items were focused on the approval or disapproval to some type of provocation or exposure to violence, the response categories were recoded after the descriptive analyses had been performed to reflect one continuous interval level variable for the purposes of multivariate linear regression analysis. Recoding and transformation of variables is discussed in more detail in the following chapter (*See* Official Data Analysis).

Independent and Control Variables

The independent variable, assimilation, refers to the extent to which a person from one cultural group (Latino) has adopted the cultural norms or characteristics of another cultural group (American) (Caetano, et al., 2007; Gordon, 1964). For the purposes of this study, it can be more broadly viewed as the extent to which a respondent perceives himself to be *Americanized*. As discussed in the previous chapter, prior research has extensively used immigrant status (i.e., first, second, or third generation) as a measure of assimilation. The problem with this approach is that it presumes that the second generation is more assimilated than the first generation, and that the third

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generation is more assimilated than the second. As indicated by the research on contemporary immigrant groups and their children, the assimilation process is much more complex (Portes & Zhou, 1993). While immigration status and other classical measures such as language use and length of stay in the U.S. are certainly influential on the assimilation outcome, recent literature has suggested that a number of other factors should be accounted for when determining the extent of integration among today's (primarily Latino and Asian) immigrants, and particularly their descendants (Xie & Greenman, 2005).

Consequently, there were several different dimensions used to measure Latino assimilation levels in the instant study, and these can be categorized as falling under three primary factors: language, ethnic identity, and ethnic interaction (Cuellar, Arnold & Maldonado, 1995). The ARMSA-II is a 30-item orthogonal, multidimensional Likert-type scale that was designed to measure acculturation based on language, ethnic identity, and ethnic interaction. Through the use of two subscales (Mexican Orientation subscale and Anglo Orientation subscale), the ARSMA-II identifies orientation toward the Mexican culture and the Anglo culture independently. For example, language is measured by identifying respondents' level of English proficiency and their exposure to and use of the English language, including whether they speak Spanish or English at home. Ethnic identity is measured by examining the extent to which respondents (and their parents, if applicable) identify as being American or Latino. Finally, ethnic interaction is measured by the extent to which Latinos associate with non-Latinos, and the level of contact they have with their countries of origin. Together, these factors form the basis for a composite scale that measures Latino assimilation on the basis of which

cultural orientation individuals are most likely to identify with—American (Anglo) or

Latino. Thus, the composite scale used in this study consists of two subscales, a Latino

Orientation subscale (LOS) and an Anglo Orientation subscale (AOS), with a combined

number of 30-items (17 LOS, 13 AOS) (Table 2).

Table 2

Independent Variable (Level of Assimilation)

Latino Orientation Subscale (LOS)*

(1 = not at all; 2 = very little/not very much; 3 = moderately; 4 = much/very often; 5 = almost always/extremely often)

I speak Spanish	1 - 5
I enjoy speaking Spanish	1 - 5
I associate w/Latinos	1 - 5
I enjoy Spanish language music	1 - 5
I enjoy Spanish language t.v.	1 - 5
I enjoy Spanish language movies	1 - 5
I enjoy reading books in Spanish	1 - 5
I write letters in Spanish	1 - 5
My thinking is done in the Spanish language	1 - 5
My contact with my Latin-American country of origin has been	1 - 5
My father identifies or identified himself as Latino	1 - 5
My mother identifies or identified herself as Latina	1 - 5
My friends while I was growing up were of Latino origin	1 - 5
My family cooks Latino foods	1 - 5
My friends now are of Latino origin	1 - 5

I like to identify myself as Latino-American	1 - 5
I like to identify myself as (country of origin)	1 - 5

<u>Anglo Orientation Subscale (AOS)</u>*

(1 = not at all; 2 = very little/not very much; 3 = moderately; 4 = much/very often; 5 = almost always/extremely often)

I enjoy English speaking	1 - 5
I associate with Anglos	1 - 5
I enjoy listening to English language music	1 - 5
I enjoy English language t.v.	1 - 5
I enjoy English language movies	1 - 5
I enjoy reading books in English	1 - 5
I write letters in English	1 - 5
My thinking is done in the English language	1 - 5
My contact w/the USA has been	1 - 5
My friends while I was growing up were of Anglo origin	1 - 5
My friends now are of Anglo origin	1 - 5
I like to identify myself as an Anglo American	1 - 5
I like to identify myself as American	1 - 5

*Scales and items borrowed and adapted from Cuellar, Arnold, and Maldonado's (1995) Acculturation Rating Scale of Mexican Americans-II (ARMSA-II).

This research was interested, specifically, in the degree to which Latinos have developed an orientation toward Anglo-American culture. Particularly, respondents were

presented with a series of statements to which they responded on a 5-point Likert-type

scale (1= *Not at all*, 5= *Almost always/extremely often*). For each respondent, a mean

LOS score was calculated by summing the 17 items of the LOS scale and dividing by 17.

Likewise, a mean AOS score was calculated by summing the 13 items of the AOS and

dividing by 13. A linear acculturation score was obtained for each subject by subtracting

the mean LOS score from the mean AOS. To facilitate interpretation of the results, the

total score was represented by plus score for individuals who were more Anglo oriented

and minus scores for those who were more Latino oriented.

Cuellar et al. (1995) have reported reliability data between .60 and .94 for the

scales and subscales using a variety of reliability measures such as split-half, test-retest

methods, and coefficient alpha. More specifically, the Mexican Orientation subscale

(MOS) consists of 17 items, and has a coefficient alpha of .88, and the Anglo Orientation

subscale (AOS) consists of 13 items, and has a coefficient alpha of .83. Further, when

comparing the results of the original ARSMA survey with that of the ARSMA-II for

concurrent validity, a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient of .89 was reported

in a sample of 117 individuals. The authors have approved the use of the scale with other

ethnic groups, and therefore, this researcher has adapted the questions for use more

generally with "Latinos" rather than the Mexican subgroup. Again, although both linear

and orthogonal (categorical) measures can be obtained using the ARSMA-II scale, this

study utilized the acculturation score as a linear continuous measure for multivariate

analyses.

In addition to *level* of assimilation, *type* of assimilation was also examined

through the incorporation of concepts from segmented assimilation theory. In short, the

theory recognizes that Americanization may not be entirely beneficial for some individuals, specifically those who experience drastic social inequality. Such individuals are particularly susceptible to downward assimilation into the underprivileged segments of the social structure and, as a result, become more vulnerable to maladjustment.

There are a number of social and situational factors both internal and external to a particular immigrant group that may determine susceptibility to the downward assimilation path. Three major determinants are: color (race), residential location, and the absence of mobility ladders (social and human capital) (Portes & Zhou, 1993). In additional to examining levels of assimilation among Latino males in the U.S., this study attempted to examine the type of assimilation experience through the inclusion of key segmented assimilation concepts including: race, residential location, social class, social capital, human capital, and the manner of reception by U.S. society. The variables and coding thereof are listed in Table 3 and described below.

Table 3

Coding for Segmented Assimilation Variables

Race (RACE)

    0 = White

    1 = Black, African American, or Negro

    2 = American Indian or Alaskan Native

    3 = Other race

Residential location (RESIDENCE)

    0 = Urban/Central City

    1 = Suburban

    2 = Rural

Educational Attainment (EDATT)

       Years of Schooling Completed (continuous)

Employment status (EMPSTAT)

       0 = Yes

       1 = No

Social Class (SOCCLASS)

Two total items—scores combined (Range 0 – 8, Low to high perceived socioeconomic status)

1.   Perceived Absolute Standard of Living

       0 = Poor

       1 = Nearly poor

       2 = Just getting by

       3 = Living comfortably

       4 = Very well off

2.   Perceived Relative Standard of Living

       0 = Much worse off

       1 = Somewhat worse off

       2 = About the same

       3 = Better off

       4 = Much better off

Social Capital (SOCAP)

Six total items—scores combined (Range 1 – 22, Zero to high ethnic solidarity)

1. Perception of co-ethnic community representation

       1 = Small to non-existent ethnic community

       2 = Moderate ethnic community

       3 = Strong ethnic community

2. Had Latino friends over the home

    0 = Not at all

    1 = About one time

    2 = Two to three times

    3 = About once a week

    4 = More than once a week

3. Hung out with other Latinos in public

    0 = Not at all

    1 = About one time

    2 = Two to three times

    3 = About once a week

    4 = More than once a week

4. Visited with relatives

    0 = Not at all

    1 = About one time

    2 = Two to three times

    3 = About once a week

    4 = More than once a week

5. Participation in Religious services (past year)

    0 = not at all

    1 = a few times a year

    2 = about 1-2 times/month

    3 = 1 time/week

    4 = more than 1 time/week

6. Extent of Religious influence

    0 = Strongly disagree

    1 = Somewhat disagree

2 = Somewhat Agree

3 = Strongly Agree

Satisfaction w/treatment by US non-Latinos (PERCEPTMT)

0 = Very satisfied

1 = Somewhat satisfied

2 = Somewhat dissatisfied

3 = Very dissatisfied

Perception of discrimination by non-Latinos in US (PERCEPDIS)

0 = Strongly Agree

1 = Somewhat Agree

2 = Somewhat Disagree

3 = Strongly Disagree

Acculturation Stress (STRAIN)

(1 = Not at all stressful; 2 = A little bit stressful; 3 = Quite a bit stressful; 4 = Very stressful; 5 = Does not

apply)

1. I have been treated badly because of my accent.	0-4
2. Because of family obligations I can't always do what I want.	0-4
3. I have worried about family members or friends having problems with immigration.	0-4
4. I have had problems at school because of my poor English.	0-4
5. I do not feel comfortable with people whose culture is different from mine.	0-4
6. I have felt pressure to learn Spanish.	0-4
7. I have felt that I need to speak Spanish better.	0-4
8. I have argued with my girlfriend/significant other over being too tradtional.	0-4
9. My friends think I'm acting "White".	0-4
10. My parents feel I do not respect older people the way I should.	0-4

11. I feel unfconfortable when others mnake jokes about or put down people   0-4

of my ethnic background.

12. I have argued with family members because I do not want to do some tradtions.   0-4

13. I have had to translate/interpret for my parents.   0-4

14. I have felt lonely and isolated because omy family does not stick together.   0-4

15. I have felt that others do not accept me because of my ethnic group.   0-4

16. I have had to help my parents by explaining how to do things in the U.S.   0-4

17. I feel like I can't do what most American kids do because of my parents' culture.   0-4

18. I feel like belonging to a gang is part of representing my ethnic group.   0-4

19. Sometimes I do not understand why people from different ethnic backgrounds   0-4

act a certain way.

20. Sometimes I feel that it will be harder to succeed because of my ethnic background.   0-4

Segmented assimilation theory suggests that social capital and human capital

may keep immigrant youth from adopting a cultural orientation toward violence and

delinquency (Zhou, 1997). For the purposes of this study, social capital refers to the

presence of a strong coethnic community and the extent to which a respondent maintains

strong intra-ethnic relationships with family and peers (ethnic solidarity). As discussed

in chapter two, the literature has also revealed that religiosity may also be a strong

component of ethnic identity, solidarity, and informal social control (Cao, 2005; Levitt,

2002; Warner, 2007; Zhou & Bankston, 1994)—particularly among U.S. Latinos (Levitt,

2002). Thus, an index was created to measure social capital based on responses to six

items: A self-reported measure indicating the level of representation of coethnics living in

the respondent's community, the extent to which respondents have Latino friends over to

their homes, the extent to which respondents hang out with Latinos in a public place, the

extent to which respondents visit with relatives, and two dimensions of religiosity, including the extent to which respondents attend religious services and the extent to which respondents agree that religion influences their lifestyles.

For the first item, coethnic representation, respondents were asked to indicate whether they perceived the coethnic community (e.g., Latino representation) in which they live is small to non-existent (0), moderate (1), or strong (2). Definitions of small/non-existent and strong ethnic communities were provided directly behind the survey question for clarification (*See* Appendix B). For the three items designed to measure the degree of informal socialization with other Latinos (including relatives), responses were scored on a 5-point likert-type scale ranging from *Not at all* (0) to *More than once a week* (5).

As previously stated, there were two variables pertaining to religiosity: Participation in religious services and religious influence. First, respondents were asked to specify how often they attended religious services. There were five possible responses, ranging from *not at all* to *more than once per week*. Second, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that their religion influenced their lifestyle. Responses were based on a likert-type scale ranging from *Strongly agree* to *Strongly disagree*. Scores from each item were combined, resulting in a possible range of 1 to 22 (low to high ethnic solidarity).

In this study, human capital refers to the attainment of skills that may provide social and economic mobility. According to the research, two primary sources of human capital that provide the second-generation with access to economic success while subsequently warding off the threats posed by Americanization (e.g., discrimination and

conflict) are education and employment (Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005). Thus, two variables (educational attainment and employment status) were used to measure human capital. Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education achieved. It was a continuous variable, and was measured by asking respondents to indicate the highest number of years of school completed at the time of the survey. Employment status was a binary variable that was measured by asking respondents whether they were currently employed (*Yes* = 0, *No* = 1).

According to Portes and Zhou (1993), three of the most influential, and often interrelated, factors in determining one's vulnerability to downward assimilation are race, social class and residential location. Race, for this study, was measured by asking respondents to self-identify from a list of four categories (0 = *White*, 1 = *Black, African American, or Negro*, 2 = *American Indian or Alaskan Native*, 3 = *Other race*). Respondents were given the option to select more than one category. For respondents who answered *Other*, there was a space provided where they were given the opportunity to write in a response that was not included among the existing categories.

According to Gordon (1964), "People of different social classes tend to act differently and have different values even if they have the same ethnic background" (p. 52). Segmented assimilation theory recognizes the power of social class in determining the overall assimilation experience, specifically for the children of economically and socially disadvantaged immigrant groups (Portes & Zhou, 1993). In fact, Portes and Zhou hypothesized that second and successive generation children who are unable to achieve social and economic mobility remain particularly vulnerable to assimilation into the underclass (downward assimilation).

In this study, social class was measured by a two-item index, designed to measure both absolute and relative deprivation based on respondents' perceptions of their economic positions in society. Scores from each item were averaged to create one socioeconomic status measure (Romero & Roberts, 2003). Respondents were first asked: "What best describes your family's standard of living?", with responses based on a likert-type ordinal scale ranging from *Poor* to *Very well off*. The second item asked: "Compared to other families in your community, would you say your family is financially better off or worse off than other families?" with responses ranging from *Much worse off* to *Much better* off. Combined scores resulted in a possible range of 0 to 8 (low to high perceived socioeconomic status). Differences in socioeconomic status may determine, to a large extent, the access to resources available to young Latino males and their families. However, according to Portes and Zhou, there are other decisive factors that have bearing on available resources, and hence, assimilation outcomes. Another key factor to consider in terms of negative assimilation outcomes was residential location.

Residential location has particular relevance to assimilation experiences, especially given that the settlement patterns of contemporary Latino immigrants and their offspring often place them in socially and economically disadvantaged communities across the U.S. (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Vigil, 2002). Location, and hence, proximity to other relatively disadvantaged U.S. and foreign-born minorities, has been found to be a significant risk factor for involvement in delinquent and criminal activities among Latinos residing in inner cities or large metropolitan areas (Martinez & Lee, 2000; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Vigil, 2003; Zhou, 1997). For this reason, residential location was

another variable used as a measure of segmented assimilation theory. Residential location refers to the type of area in which a respondent physically resides. In other words, respondents were asked to identify whether they lived in a central city/urban area, suburban area, or rural area.

Certain immigrant groups, largely because of cultural and phenotypical (racial) affinity, have been subjected to traditional prejudice and discrimination by mainstream American society, thereby resulting in a jagged process of adaptation (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002; Zhou, 1997). In this study, two key concepts were examined to determine respondents' perceptions of discrimination and inequality in the United States: perceptions of overall treatment by non-Latino Americans in the U.S. and perceptions of discrimination by non-Latino Americans in the U.S. Perceptions of overall treatment by non-Latino Americans were measured by asking respondents to rate their overall satisfaction with how they are personally treated by non-Latino Americans. Discrimination perception was measured by asking respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the following statement: "Persons of Latino or Hispanic origin are discriminated against by Anglo (non-Latino) Americans in the United States." Response categories for the first item were based on a 4-point likert-type scale ranging from *Very satisfied* (0) to *Very dissatisfied* (3). For the second item, response categories were based on a 4-point likert-type scale ranging from *Strongly agree* (0) to *Strongly disagree* (3).

While Portes and Zhou (1993), among others, have concluded that biculturalism seems to be the least problematic assimilation outcome, empirical studies have shown that second and successive generation Latinos living in the U.S. are much more likely

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than the first generation to experience psychosocial stresses related to acculturation (Gil, Vega, & Dimas, 1994; Romero & Roberts, 2003). One interpretation suggests that such stressors or strains are the result of their attempt to coordinate two conflicting cultural worlds—the ethnic subculture and dominant society (Xie & Greenman, 2005). Although Portes and Zhou (1993) have identified some sources of stress in their theory (e.g., discrimination), the relationship between the bicultural context of stress (intergenerational stress and peer pressure to conform to a Latino identity) and increased vulnerability to maladaptive outcomes remains largely conjectural in the context of their theory. Thus, this study incorporated a measure designed to assess acculturation stress in a bicultural context.

The *Bicultural Stressors Scale* (Romero & Roberts, 2003) was used in this study. The 20 items that make up the composite scale assess everyday life stressors experienced by adolescents in the context of school (monolingual stressors), peers (pressure to conform to one's ethnic group identity), and family (intergenerational conflicts). The scale was developed using a sample of racially and ethnically diverse adolescents (18-21 years), and has been used in previous research with middle school students of Mexican descent (Romero & Roberts, 2003). Reliability and validity data for this scale indicated an internal consistency alpha of .93.

Respondents were presented with a series of statements to which they were asked to indicate, if applicable, how stressful the experiences have been for them (see Table 3). Instructions read: "Please indicate how stressful the following experiences have been for you. If you have never had the experience please fill in 'does not apply'". Responses were based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Not at all stressful*) to 4

(*Very stressful*) (0 = *Does not apply*). The composite score was created by summing the responses on all items. Thus, scores on the Bicultural Stressors Scale potentially ranged from 0 to 80. Higher scores indicated more acculturation stress.

Again, the expectation was that that Latino attitudes toward violence are influenced by their level of assimilation in the United States. However, cultural values (i.e., machismo) and a number of socio-demographic variables (i.e., age, ancestry) may influence the assimilation experience in a different way than particular measured assimilation levels. Thus, factors which have been found to moderate the relationship between level of assimilation and attitudes toward violence were also accounted for in the instant study. The control variables and codes are listed in Table 4 and described below.

Table 4

Coding for Control Variables

Demographic Characteristics:

Age (AGE)

Continuous (Range 18-25)

Marital Status (MARSTAT)

0 = Married

1 = Widowed

2 = Divorced

3 = Separated

4 = Never Married

Place of Birth (NATIVITY)

0 = Native (US) born

1 = Foreign born

Father's Place of Birth (PGENSTAT)

0 = Native (US) born

1 = Foreign born

2 = Don't know

Mother's Place of Birth (MGENSTAT)

0 = Native (US) born

1 = Foreign born

2 = Don't know

Ancestry or Ethnic Origin (SUBGROUP)

       0 = Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano

       1 = Puerto Rican

       2 = Cuban

       3 = Central or South American

       4 = Dominican

       5 = Other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino

Cultural Characteristics:

Machismo (MACHISMO)

Two total items—scores combined (Range 0 – 8, Zero to high masculinity)

1. Perception of male masculinity

2. Male superiority over female

0 = Strongly disagree

1 = Somewhat disagree

2 = Somewhat agree

3 = Strongly agree

Cultural agreement w/ regular alcohol consumption (ALCOHOL)

0 = yes

1 = no

2 = not sure

Alcohol consumption/past 30 days (ALCONSUMP)

0 = not at all

1 = about one time

2 = 2-3 times

3 = about 1 time/week

4 = more than 1 time/week

Alcohol and violence witnessed over a 12-month period (DRINKVIOLENT)

0 = not at all

1 = a few times

2 = about 1 time/month

3 = about 1 time/week

4 = more than 1 time/week

Socio-demographic characteristics refer to extraneous factors that may affect the
relationship between the independent variable (level of assimilation) and dependent

variable (attitudes toward violence), and therefore, were controlled for during the

analysis. For the purposes of this study, socio-demographic characteristics included age,

marital status, religious affiliation and influence, nativity (U.S. or foreign-born), and

ancestry. These characteristics were included as control variables in this study because

many of them have been found to influence assimilation experiences and involvement in

delinquent or criminal behavior—particularly among U.S. Latinos (Bui & Thongniramol,

2005; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Vigil, 2002).

The first socio-demographic control variable examined in this study was age,

which was measured as a continuous variable. Respondents were asked to record their

age (in years) at the time of the survey. Marital status was also included among the

control variables. The reason for their inclusion in this study was because differences in

levels of self-reported involvement in aggression and delinquency (e.g., substance abuse

and violent delinquency), primarily between first and second generation groups, have

been explained in part by family relationships and other informal methods of social

control (Bui, 2009; Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Samaniego & Gonzales, 1999;

Smokowski & Bacallao, 2009). Marital status was measured by asking respondents to

identify whether they were currently married, widowed, divorced, separated, or never

married (coded as 0-4, respectively).

As stated throughout the preceding chapters of this study, both conventional and

contemporary studies on immigrant assimilation in the U.S. have indicated variable

outcomes in terms of the criminal involvement between U.S. and foreign-born

immigrants and their children. Contrary to expectations, findings have consistently

shown higher rates of maladjustment and criminality among the U.S.-born. To explore

its possible effect on pro-violent attitudes, nativity was also controlled for in this study. The nativity variable was coded as a binary variable. If a respondent was U.S.-born, the variable was coded as 0. If a respondent was born outside of the U.S., the variable was coded as 1.

In addition to determining respondents' nativity, two key variables were also included to determine the generational status of the sample for descriptive purposes. Particularly, respondents were also asked to indicate whether their Mother and Father were born in the U.S. or abroad. Coding remained the same as in respondent's nativity: If U.S.-born, the variable was coded as 0, and if foreign-born, it was coded as 1. It should be noted that this information was used in the discussion of descriptive analyses to indicate the extent to which respondents were first or second and successive generation Latinos living in the U.S., but then excluded from any further analysis.

Research has also indicated that acculturation/assimilation processes may vary among different Latino subgroups depending on their country of origin and the manner in which they are received by the host country (Martinez & Lee, 2000; Suàrez-Orozco & Pàez, 2002). To determine whether there were any changes in the acceptance of violence depending on the respondent's ancestry or ethnic origin, Latino subgroup was also included as a variable in these analyses. Specifically, respondents were asked to identify their ancestry as having origins in Mexico, Cuba, South or Central America, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, or other Spanish/Latin American country.

The concept, cultural characteristics, refers to culture-specific behaviors, including machismo, alcohol consumption, and exposure to violence, that were also accounted for in these analyses because of their significance in prior research—

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particularly, research on Latino populations in the U.S. As stated in chapter three, machismo refers to male dominance and strength, and has often been associated with male aggression and violence against women among Mexican males (DeMente, 1996). Machismo was measured using a two-item scale designed to examine respondents' approval of male dominance and superiority over women. More specifically, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with the following statements: "Men are supposed to demonstrate a certain degree of masculinity or else they may be seen as a wimp, impotent, or a homosexual" and "Men are superior to women in most respects." A 4-point likert-type scale was used to measure each of the two items. Scores from each were combined, and resulted in a possible range from 0 to 6 (zero to high masculinity).

Two variables were used to measure cultural support for alcohol consumption. First, respondents were asked specifically if their culture supported the regular consumption of alcoholic beverages (*Yes* = 0, *No* = 1, *Not sure* = 2). Second, respondents were asked to indicate the number of times over the past 30 days they had personally consumed alcohol. Possible responses ranged from *Not at all* to *More than once a week*. Considering a potential relationship between exposure to alcohol-related violence and one's subsequent participation in violence, an additional variable was added to examine the extent to which respondents had witnessed alcohol-related violence by Latino males over the past 30 days. More specifically, respondents were asked: "In the past year, how often (if at all) have you witnessed a situation in which drinking among Latino men led to these men becoming violent?" The variable was measured based on responses to a 6-item likert-type scale ranging from *Not at all* to *More than once a week*.

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The following section describes in detail the survey administration and research procedures that were utilized in the proposed study. Human subject protections are then discussed, followed by strengths and limitations of the study.

Survey Administration and Research Procedures

According to Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009), there are unique implementation strategies that should be considered when using web-based surveys in research. These strategies largely center on the mode of contact between researcher and potential respondents, particularly the extent of personalization used, the logistics of using and delivering incentives, and the timing of contacts. Because participation was presumed to be problematic with the target population for a number of reasons such as language barriers, privacy concerns, and lower response rates for this particular survey method, the researcher used a combination of social exchange elements as proposed by Dillman (2007). For example, to gain participation for this study, the researcher attempted to recruit potential respondents through the creation of a *MySpace* personal profile that displayed some background characteristics (e.g., name, affiliation, photo, research interests, and schooling) and a description and explanation of this study, including assurances of confidentiality and security of information so that trust could be established.

Additionally, the researcher took appropriate steps throughout to apply social exchange theory, particularly in the survey announcement which incorporated appeals for help or advice and reminders, personalized "thank you" follow-up notices, clear instructions for how to access the survey, and finally, a questionnaire that was stimulating

in terms of both design and content.   The remainder of this section provides more detail as to the specific implementation procedures that were utilized.

As previously discussed (see Sampling), the researcher created a *MySpace Latino* account sometime during the fall semester of 2009, and through the appropriate search parameters, identified, and "friend requested" a number of potential respondents. According to Dillman, et al. (2009), a four e-mail contact strategy is an appropriate method to use with potential web survey respondents. Given that the mode of contact between researcher and respondents in the instant study was limited to use of the *MySpace* messaging system, and no email addresses were solicited or identified, the researcher utilized a unique contact strategy with modifications to the method of communication. In the context of this study, this strategy consisted of a pre-notice invitation (*MySpace* bulletin) and follow-up bulletins/announcements on the study profile page. These are described in more detail below.

Once an adequate number of individuals meeting the specifications described earlier (i.e., age) were identified and successful "friendships" were established with them, the researcher sent out a pre-notice bulletin to all of the "friends" in her network. This initial contact provided a brief description of the study including an appeal for help, why the individual was selected, the reasons why their responses were important to understanding the phenomenon under study, the confidential and voluntary nature of the survey, the researcher's affiliation and contact information, and an appropriate statement of thanks for their time and consideration (Dillman, et al., 2009). In addition to directing potential respondents to the researcher's profile page where they could read about the study further and directly link to the survey, the pre-notice also provided a direct link to

the survey for individuals who did not wish to redirect to the profile. It should also be noted that Qualtrics offers an *Open Access* feature, which allows anyone who can access the link to take the survey. In this way, potential respondents who just stumbled across the researcher's profile page could directly link to the questionnaire (http://www.qualtrics.com/wiki/index.php/Survey_Options_Page).

When a respondent accessed the survey in Qualtrics through an anonymous link, a *cookie*[4] was automatically placed on their browser so that the program could remember that respondent in the event of computer problems, time issues, or other technological issues they were encountered during survey administration (Dillman, et al., 2009). By allowing respondents to return to question where they had previously stopped taking the survey, this feature enabled respondents to leave and reenter the survey as many times as necessary (http://www.qualtrics.com/wiki/index.php/Survey_Options_Page). Further, it allowed the researcher and potential respondents minimal contact, which helped alleviate some of the concerns with confidentiality and anonymity.

It was expected that an appropriate time frame between providing potential respondents with the survey link (on the profile page and in a prenotice bulletin) and completion of the survey would be about one to two weeks. After a two-week period, the researcher evaluated the number of volunteers, and since the desired sample size was not obtained, a reminder bulletin was sent to all potential respondents again asking for their

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[4] A cookie is a small text string sent by a web server to a browser. The browser than stores the text on a user's hard drive and sends it back to the web server at a later time. In this way, internet users can revisit websites without having to provide identifying information (Millett, Friedman, & Felten, 2001).

participation. Throughout the entire process, the researcher periodically logged into her member page and other provided contact-related accounts (phone, email) to answer any questions potential respondents had.

Once all interested volunteers linked onto the survey, they were greeted with an opening or welcome screen that offered them the choice to proceed in English or Spanish. After the appropriate selection had been made, another welcome page emerged providing them with a more detailed explanation of the study including explicit instructions on how to proceed and complete survey questions. Most importantly, respondents were cued that their decision to proceed by clicking on the appropriate button at the bottom of the screen would be considered their informed consent—a point that is discussed in more detail below.   It was estimated that it would take each person approximately 35-45 minutes to complete the survey and that data collection would continue over the course of about two to three weeks until the desired sample size was obtained.

Human Subject Protections

The potential for risk was minimal in this study. The respondents in this study were male Latino adolescents and young adults between the ages of 18-25. This researcher had minimal contact with participants, as the recruitment process was conducted using a blanket announcement on the researcher's profile page and through one pre-notice bulletin. Furthermore, as previously stated, the survey software used in the instant study made it possible for respondents to access the survey through an anonymous link, and therefore, no identifying information was collected or reported to the researcher after completion. Despite these measures, there were several human subject protections that must be considered in this study: anonymity and confidentiality,

informed consent, voluntary participation, and harm to participants. These are discussed in more detail below.

The first protections to be discussed are related to confidentiality and privacy (anonymity) concerns. Given that potential respondents were recruited based on identifying information contained in an online social networking site (e.g., name, age, location), it was important to address the issue of confidentiality immediately. Particularly, potential respondents were ensured that the researcher intends to analyze these data solely for statistical research purposes, not to identify individuals.

Similar to confidentiality, it was presumed that anonymity would be a concern for both participants and the social networking site in which recruitment occurred. Before and at the initial point of contact, the researcher addressed privacy concerns with respondents. As previously explained, this information was provided on the researcher's main profile page and in the pre-notice bulletin. Particularly, the researcher clearly explained to all parties that any of the identifying information that the researcher encountered through *MySpace Latino* (during creation of the profile and subsequent friend requesting) or through inquiries received from potential respondents who may contact the researcher with questions or concerns, would not be reported to anyone. The data was stored on hard drive and on disk so that the researcher could perform statistical analyses; however, the researcher kept this documentation inaccessible and available only to the researcher. No identifying remarks are included in the final document. Data is being temporarily stored in the researcher's Qualtrics account and accessible only by the researcher. Further, the confidentiality of participants is maintained by excluding any

names and/or other identifying information from the final document. Results from the

study are only presented in the aggregate and do not provide any identifying information.

Respondents also provided their informed consent to participate in this study. To

ensure that respondents understood their participation was voluntary, in addition to

written assurances provided by the researcher, all respondents were informed on the first

page of the web survey that their decision to proceed automatically establishes their

informed consent. Respondents were able to print out this page for their records

immediately before clicking the button at the bottom of the page. A copy of the cover

page from the survey can be viewed in Appendix B.

Strengths and Limitations of Methods

The sampling method chosen for this study was availability (convenience)

sampling. While this particular method was justified for a couple of reasons, including

the exploratory nature of this study and the lack of accessibility to Latino populations, it

also served as a primary limitation. For example, according to Bachman & Schutt (2007),

this sampling method results in a non-representative sample, and therefore, the results are

not generalizable to Latino males in general or maybe even Latino males residing in

United States. A related limitation included the limited number of Latino subgroups

having online access or the skills required to complete the survey. As previously

discussed, there are several characteristics of internet-using U.S.-based Latinos (i.e.,

higher educational attainment, higher socioeconomic status) that should be considered,

particularly when making statistical inferences based on the information collected in this

study. Further, attempting to apply the findings directly to Latinos as one homogeneous

group may be misleading for many reasons including variability in culture as determined

by the country of origin and the manner in which individuals were received by the host country. Despite such limitations, it is the researcher's contention that the sample size (N = 314) allowed, at the least, for a better understanding of assimilation and its influence on attitudes toward violence among Latinos living in the United States.

This study utilized a cross-sectional research design method. Considering some of the accessibility issues already discussed, the researcher considered this type of design superior for two reasons. First, cross-sectional research is more cost-effective than a longitudinal or experimental design (Babbie, 2004; Menard, 2002). Second, although a longitudinal panel design would be the preferred method to examine causal order and the effects of assimilation on violence over time, a high likelihood of panel attrition would potentially impede the benefits of this method of observance. For reasons of data quality, therefore, this researcher contends that cross-sectional analysis remains beneficial. A suggestion for future research using a longitudinal method may be to use a revolving panel design so to disentangle age, period, and cohort effects, to minimize panel attrition, and to maintain an adequate number of cases (Menard, 2002).

Analysis Plan

The statistical procedures that were employed in this study included a combination of descriptive, bivariate, and multivariate analyses. Descriptive statistics were conducted, and percentage and frequency tables examined, to explain the characteristics of the sample and variables of interest, including independent and control (demographic and cultural) variables. Scale reliability tests (Cronbach Alphas) were also conducted and presented for the dependent variable and scaled independent variables.

The remaining data analysis involved both bivariate and multivariate analyses. Before proceeding, however, all of the variables were placed into the appropriate format to run further analyses (e.g., categorical variables were recoded into dummy variables). Bivariate correlations were used to explore relationships between independent variables and to check for multicollinearity. A correlation coefficient matrix was obtained to assess the relationship between each independent variable with the dependent variable. Although these results were indicative of the differences in attitudes toward violence on various dimensions or subgroups, multivariate analyses were employed to single out the effect of assimilation on violent attitudes by controlling the effects of other factors, such as age, nativity, marital status, education, income, masculinity (machismo), alcohol use, and exposure to violence, that have been found to influence the level of violence among Latinos (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Suàrez-Orozco & Pàez, 2002; Vigil, 2002).

Because attitudes toward violence were measured as a single continuous score, three sets of linear ordinary least-squares (OLS) regression analyses were conducted to estimate the overall effect of assimilation on violent attitudes for Latino males at varying levels and types of assimilation and for different demographic and Latino subgroups. The following equation was used to estimate these effects for OLS regression:

$$\hat{y} = a_0 + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + \ldots + b_kx_k + e$$

Where:

a_0 = constant

$\hat{y}$ = attitudes toward violence (i.e., physical, verbal, or relational)

b_k = slope

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x_1 = assimilation level

x_2 = race

x_3 = residential location

x_4 = educational attainment

x_5 = employment status

x_6 = social class

x_7 = social capital

x_8 = satisfaction with treatment by U.S. non-Latinos

x_9 = perception of discrimination

x_{10} = acculturation stress

x_{11} = age

x_{12} = nativity

x_{13} = subgroup

x_{14} = machismo

x_{15} = cultural agreement with alcohol consumption

x_{16} = alcohol consumption

x_{17} = exposure to alcohol-related violence

x_{18} = marital status

Once the regression equation was calculated from the data, appropriate measures of association and tests of statistical significance were examined separately for each coefficient and for the regression equation.

CHAPTER V

OFFICIAL DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to develop a better understanding of the

relationship between the Americanization process experienced by second and successive

Latino males and attitudes toward violence, particularly from a segmented assimilation

perspective. To accomplish this task, 333 surveys were collected from a diverse group of

Latino males age 18-25 who were, at the time of the survey enumeration, living in

various parts of the United States. The surveys were relatively intense, generating

information from respondents related to demographics, socioeconomic status, cultural

characteristics, level of assimilation, extent of acculturation stress, and approval of the

use of violence in various circumstances. This chapter reports the univariate, bivariate,

and multivariate results from the analysis of data. First, a brief description of the sample

is necessary to demonstrate some of the strengths and limitations associated with the

method of data collection as originally proposed. Second, results from frequency

distributions and descriptive data analyses are examined. Bivariate correlations are then

presented and briefly discussed. Finally, the results from the multiple regression analyses

are examined and discussed specific to the hypotheses listed in Chapter four.

Description of Sample

Prior research has indicated the difficulty in accessing Latinos, particularly for the

purpose of survey research (Capeheart & Sweet, 2006; Gil, Vegas, & Dimas, 1994;

Lopez, 2008). In an attempt to collect data on a geographically, culturally, and ethnically

diverse sample of Latino males living in the United States, this study originally proposed

to implement a unique methodology which included drawing a sample from various social networking websites (e.g., *Facebook, MySpace Latino*) possibly frequented by second and successive generation Latinos. As described in detail in Chapter three, the first step was to create a profile explaining the study and how to access the survey (a direct link to the survey posted on the profile page). Second, potential respondents were invited to through a series of "friend requests", which involved a continuous process of searching parameters (ages 18-21, male), sending "invitations" and reminders when possible, and frequently checking e-mails and other message forums provided by the social networking sites for any questions or concerns sent by respondents. The first profiles were created, and friend-requests initiated, in the early spring of 2010.

After approximately a period of one month, the number of completed surveys was minimal (n =35). While prior research indicated that social networking websites may yield relatively low response rates (Redmond, 2010; Tan, 2010), this researcher was optimistic that with the growing number of Latinos online, the nation-wide recruitment of participants ("friend requests"), and the user-friendly nature of the survey and its availability in both English and Spanish, would translate into a decent return rate. By the first week in April of 2010, moderators from *Quepasa.com* and *MySpace Latino* had deleted the profiles created for the study and all of the messages between the researcher and potential respondents which occurred over the course of about two to three weeks. While inquiries were sent to contact persons at each of the networking sites, the only response was from *MySpace*—and this response appeared to be a computer-generated list of general reasons why a profile could be deleted. Consequently, this researcher began

to consider other methods by which to obtain the required number of participants (n=185).

Particularly, a request was sent to the Institutional Review Board at Indiana University of Pennsylvania asking for a modification in the method of data collection. This request sought permission to utilize the following recruitment strategies based upon a convenience sampling method: advertising the link to the survey on websites that cater to Latino groups; requesting survey participation during face-to-face encounters with members of Latino social or advocacy groups (e.g., the Latino student organization at IUP); and, recruiting Latino students at colleges or universities in the U.S. with high Latino enrollments.

In April and May of 2010, this researcher attended two Latino-based events. The first was a celebration of Latino cultural heritage organized by the Latino Student Organization at IUP, and the second was a monthly meeting organized by a Latino advocacy group based in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. At each event, the researcher introduced the proposed study and distributed business cards with detailed contact information, including the direct link to the survey. During the same time period (April and May of 2010), Institutional Review Board (IRB) applications and any additional requested materials were mailed to community colleges in New Mexico, New Jersey, and Texas. In May 2010, contact was also made with facilitators of two web-based resource networks for Latinos (*tuvozentuvida.com* and *Creciendo Juntos*, or *cj-network.org*) who agreed to post a link to the survey on their respective websites. Finally, contacts were made with colleagues from universities and colleges in Texas, Georgia, California, Pennsylvania, and Florida, who agreed to announce the survey link to their students.

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While the first two strategies increased the number of cases to some extent, participation remained sporadic and extremely minimal. Particularly, the number of respondents had only reached approximately 80 by the end of June 2010. In fact, although a higher number of subjects (over 100) did appear to access the online survey, the majority were not completing it. By the Fall of 2010, upon successful recruitment of college students from central New Mexico, the number of completed surveys had increased to approximately 170. By January of 2011, with the addition of students recruited from a State college in south-eastern Florida, the number had increased further to over 200. In February of 2011, the Florida school sent out another notification to students meeting the criteria for inclusion; this last recruitment effort resulted in an increase of about 100 or more respondents who completed the survey.

The final sample consisted of 333 Latino males between the ages of 18 to 25 who were living in the U.S., some residing in diverse geographic locations (social-networking sites and Latino-based organizations), but most attending colleges in central New Mexico and south-eastern Florida. Although applications were made to colleges in New Jersey and Texas, final recruitment efforts were never finalized for reasons unknown to the researcher. Of the 333 subjects who started the survey over the 12-month period between March of 2010 and March of 2011, 208 completed it in its entirety. Consequently, although analyses were performed using all cases, there was a substantial amount of missing information that is noted within the tables below. Question response rates steadily declined as subjects moved through each survey item, ranging from 88% who completed the first question (n = 294) to 63% (n = 212) who completed the final question. Specifically, subjects were more likely to exit once they reached the scales

relating to assimilation level and acculturation stress, which were placed about halfway through the questionnaire. In fact, 251 subjects completed the assimilation level scale (75% question response rate), and 231 subjects completed the acculturation stress scale (69% question response rate). This outcome was anticipated to some extent, particularly given the length of the survey (98 questions) and the inclusion of three scales that may have been perceived as relatively complex. More detailed characteristics of the sample are described in the following sections of this chapter.

As with any type of sampling method, there are limitations that should be addressed or considered before results are presented. The following section provides an outline of potential limitations that are considered in terms of the method by which the final group of surveys for analyses were drawn.

<div align="center">**Discussion of Potential Limitations**</div>

In an attempt to understand the acculturation experience and how it relates to pro-violent attitudes, this researcher presumed that the internet presented a novel and more accessible approach to communication with such a diverse and typically hard to reach group of young men. Given the difficulties associated with maintaining the study on various social-networking sites, the presumption proved to be inaccurate, though not completely futile. The obstacles presented at the front end of this study provided a useful foundation from which to develop more effective methods of data collection with Latinos in future research. Still, the data utilized in this study should be interpreted conservatively for several reasons related to representativeness of the sample obtained. Specific limitations are discussed in more detail below.

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Besides having a low response rate, surveying only internet users may generate problems such as coverage, self-selection, and sampling error (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2007). In fact, while a growing number of Latinos may be "online", overall estimates of Latino households with current internet coverage is still relatively small when compared to other race and ethnic groups. Particularly, in their study of the patterns of household internet use among Latinos, whites, and African Americans in 2010, Livingston (2011) reported that, among respondents 18 years of age and older who reported using the internet that year, 45% of Latinos had accessed the internet from home, compared with 65% of whites and 52% of African Americans. With respect to internet use overall (from home or elsewhere), 65% of the Latinos in their sample went online in 2010, compared with 77% of Whites and 66% of Blacks. Moreover, of households that have internet access, many in the household may not have the skills needed to complete an internet-based survey (Dillman, et al., 2007). Most importantly, respondents may significantly differ from non-respondents—once again, impeding generalizability and producing biased results.

Another limitation that deserves attention is that data were largely collected on a college student sample, and therefore, findings may not generalize to other Latino males within the same age group but who do not attend college. For example, research has indicated that college students have higher rates of internet usage and more homogeneous responses on surveys (less variability) (Peterson, 2001). Given the possibility that Latino college students, or college students in general, differ from those who do not attend college on a number of factors (e.g., socioeconomic status, intellectual functioning, attitudes and beliefs), it is also likely that the Americanization process is quite different

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for those attending college versus those who do not. Besides the ability to access and efficiently complete an internet survey, Latinos in college may differ in terms of their English proficiency or biculturalism, access to human and social capital, perceptions of discrimination, intergenerational relationships, assimilation levels, and most significantly, their exposure to acculturation stress (see Castillo, Conoley, & Brossart, 2004, for bicultural stressors specific to Latina college students).

Despite these limitations, the data provided important information about acculturation and pro-violent attitudes among Latino young males living in the U.S. Results of analyses performed are presented in the sections that follow, beginning with an outline of frequencies and descriptive statistics. Bivariate relationships between the independent variables and dependent variable are also examined. Last, results of the regression analyses are examined and discussed in relation to the hypotheses that were presented in Chapter four.

Frequencies and Descriptive Statistics

In total, data was collected from a sample of 333 self-identified Latino males using the online-survey methodology described above. In an attempt to collect data on as many Latino males as possible, all surveys, complete and incomplete, were uploaded into SPSS for inclusion in this study. Once cases not meeting the age parameter (18-25) were deleted from the dataset (n = 19), a total of 314 cases were left for analysis. To account for missing data, the number of cases included in the analysis for each variable is presented in parentheses in each table. The coding for each variable is presented in brackets. To get a clearer picture of the sample of respondents obtained for the study, the frequencies and descriptive statistics were examined first for the categorical and

continuous control variables that represented demographic and cultural characteristics; this information is presented in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5

Frequency Statistics for Categorical Control Variables, Coding for Current Analysis[5]

Variable	N	%
Demographic Characteristics:		
Marital Status (MARSTAT)		
(n = 193)		
Married [1]	17	8.8
Widowed [2]	0	0.0
Divorced [3]	5	2.6
Separated [4]	1	0.5
Never Married [5]	170	88.1
Place of Birth (NATIVITY)		
(n = 267)		
Native (US) born [1]	200	74.9
Foreign born [2]	67	25.1
Father's Place of Birth (PGENSTAT)		
(n = 258)		
Native (US) born [1]	106	41.1
Foreign born [2]	140	54.3
Don't know [3]	12	4.6
Mother's Place of Birth (MGENSTAT)		
(n = 255)		
Native (US) born [1]	117	45.9
Foreign born [2]	137	53.7
Don't know [3]	1	.4
Ancestry or Ethnic Origin (SUBGROUP)		
(n = 273)		
Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano [1]	159	58.2
Other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino [6]	114	41.8

[5] It should be noted that, after frequencies and descriptive information was examined and reported, several of the variables were transformed and/or recoded for the purposes of running multivariate analyses.

Cultural agreement w/ regular alcohol consumption (ALCOHOL)
(n = 239)

Yes [1]	102	42.7
No [2]	119	49.8
not sure [3]	18	7.5

Alcohol consumption/past 30 days (ALCONSUMP)
(n = 238)

not at all [1]	72	30.3
about one time [2]	41	17.2
2-3 times [3]	61	25.6
about 1 time/week [4]	35	14.7
more than 1 time/week [5]	29	12.2

Alcohol and violence witnessed over a 12-month period (DRINKVIOLENT)
(n = 237)

not at all [1]	101	42.6
about one time [2]	57	24.1
2-3 times [3]	63	26.5
about 1 time/week [4]	8	3.4
more than 1 time/week [5]	8	3.4

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous and Scaled Control Variables, Coding for Current Analysis

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Socio-demographic Characteristic				
Age (AGE) (n = 190)	18	25	21.26	2.16
Cultural Characteristics				
Machismo (MACHISMO) (n = 238)	Cronbach alpha: .52			
Scale Values Indicators:	2	8	3.97	2.63
Perception of male masculinity [1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Somewhat agree; 4 = Strongly agree]	1	4	2.24	1.06

Male superiority over female	1	4	1.73	.91

[1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Somewhat agree; 4 = Strongly agree]

Control Variables: Demographic Characteristics

As previously stated, respondents ages ranged from 18 to 25 with a mean age of 21.26 years (see Table 6). Analysis of nativity revealed that about three quarters of Latinos in the sample were second-generation, in that 74.9% of respondents were native/U.S.-born, and most reported having parents who were born abroad (Mother, 53.7%; Father, 54.3%). The two largest ethnic groups of Latinos in the sample included those who identified as Mexican, Mexican Americans, or Chicanos (n = 159, 58.3%) and Other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino (n = 65, 23.8%). Of those who reported their ethnicity as "other", many indicated their country of origin as Spain or Columbia. The rest of the respondents were few in numbers and came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds (Puerto Rican, n = 13; Cuban, n = 8; Central or South American, n = 14; and Dominican, n = 14). Consequently, the categories having the lowest number of cases were collapsed into the "other" category (see Table 6). Among respondents who reported their marital status, almost 90% were never married (n = 170), 8.8 percent were married, 2.6 percent were divorced, 0.5 percent were separated, and zero were widowed. Given that a substantial number of cases were missing information on marital status (n = 121), and the lack of variability in the remaining cases, this variable was excluded from further analysis

Control Variables: Cultural Characteristics

As shown in Table 6, the sample was nearly equally split in terms of reporting a cultural agreement with regular alcohol consumption with 102 respondents (42.7%) indicating a general family acceptance, and 119 (49.8%) indicating no general acceptance. When asked to report their alcohol consumption over the past 30 days, 72 respondents (30.3%) reported having no alcoholic beverages at all, 41 (17.2%) consumed alcohol about one time, 62 (25.6%) consumed alcohol about 2-3 times, 35 (14.7%) consumed alcohol at least once per week, and 29 (12.2%) consumed alcohol 2-3 times per week over the same period. In terms of the number of times over the past year in which respondents personally witnessed alcohol-induced violence perpetrated by other Latino males, 16 reported this occurring about 1-2 times per week (more than 1 time per week, n = 8 or 3.4%; about 1 time per week, n = 8 or 3.4%), 63 (26.5%) reported this occurring about 2-3 times in the past year, and 57 (24.1%) reported exposure to alcohol-related violence about 1 time over the past year. The majority of respondents (n = 102, 42.6%) did not witness any alcohol-related violence over a 12-month period. Given the low number of cases in each the last two categories (about 1 time/week & more than 1 time/week), these categories were ultimately collapsed into a single category labeled "1+ times per week" and recoded (0-4) prior to conducting multivariate analysis.

To evaluate machismo, a composite scale was created which consisted of two items designed to reveal a cultural predisposition (characteristic) toward male dominance or hyper-masculinity. Specifically, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the following statements: "Men are supposed to show their masculinity or else they may be seen as feminine, wimpy, or homosexual"; and, "Men are

superior to women in many ways". Responses on the machismo scale ranged from 2 to 8, with higher scores indicating higher machismo or agreement with male dominance/hyper-masculinity. The mean score was 3.97 and the standard deviation was 2.63. These findings are somewhat instructive—particularly, that the mean score for both items was relatively low among this sample of Latino males, which may be related to sample characteristics (college students) and a lower acceptance of violence when examined later in that context.

To assess scale reliability for machismo and other constructs throughout the remainder of these analyses, Cronbach alphas were computed and examined. According to DeVellis (2003, p. 94), alpha, the reliability coefficient, is "one of the most important indicators of a scale's quality." In short, it is a measure of the success of a scale with regards to the extent to which its items measure the same phenomena, and values can theoretically range anywhere between 0.0 and 1.0. In terms of research scales specifically, DeVellis suggested the following "comfort range": .60 or below is considered unacceptable, between .70 and .80 is respectable, and between .80 and .90 is very good. As reported in Table 6, an alpha value of .52 for the 2-item machismo scale described above indicates a low correlation for these items and a weak reliability score. This is likely to have occurred because of the low sample size and that only two items were utilized to measure the concept of interest. Theoretically speaking, machismo has been found to be a significant indicator of violence against women, particularly among Mexican males (DeMente, 1996). Consequently, both items were recoded and entered separately to determine whether anything was gained by asking these questions. Table 7 presents the frequencies and percentages for the two ordinal-level machismo variables.

Table 7

Frequency Statistics for Ordinal Level Machismo Items

Variable	N	%
Masculinity (Macho 1)		
(n = 239)		
Strongly disagree [0]	79	33.1
Somewhat disagree [1]	54	22.6
Somewhat agree [2]	74	31.0
Strongly agree [3]	32	13.4
Male Superiority (Macho 2)		
(n = 239)		
Strongly disagree [0]	128	53.6
Somewhat disagree [1]	60	25.1
Somewhat agree [2]	39	16.3
Strongly agree [3]	12	5.0

On the first indicator, male masculinity, 74 respondents (31%) indicated a somewhat high or exaggerated sense of masculinity, while 79 (33.1%) strongly disagreed with this perception. Further, with regard to their agreement with male superiority, 53.6% of respondents indicated strong disagreement with the idea that men are superior to women in many ways (n = 128), with 60 indicating some disagreement, 39 somewhat agreeing, and only 12 who strongly agreed.

Independent Variables

To overcome the limitations of previous research and to accomplish the objectives stated in the preceding chapter, this study incorporated independent variables designed to measure both the level and type of assimilation experienced by respondents. The Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II (ARMSA-II) was utilized to determine the extent to which respondents were assimilated to American culture on three inter-related measures: English proficiency, ethnic identity (Anglo or Latino), and ethnic interaction (peer associations). Particularly, for each subject, an acculturation score was

produced, and was used to determine levels of orientation toward the Latino culture and the Anglo culture. Further, in line with the segmented assimilation theoretical perspective, another set of independent variables were utilized to determine the type of assimilation, and included measures of the following theoretical constructs: Exposure to acculturation stress, race/ethnicity, residential location, social capital, human capital, and perceptions of discrimination and overall mistreatment by non-Latinos in the U.S. First, the descriptive measures of the independent variable related to level of assimilation were considered, as presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Independent Variable Representing Level of Assimilation, Coding for Current Analysis

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Level of Assimilation (ALEVEL)* (n = 203)	Cronbach alpha: .83			
	30	150	107.90	14.59
Scale Items**				
Latino Orientation Subscale (LOS)* (n = 236)		Cronbach alpha: .91		
[1 = not at all; 2 = very little/not very much; 3 = moderately; 4 = much/very often; 5 = almost always/extremely often]				
I speak Spanish	1	5	3.33	1.30
I enjoy speaking Spanish	1	5	3.64	1.34
I associate w/Latinos	1	5	4.31	.91
I enjoy Spanish language music	1	5	3.54	1.46
I enjoy Spanish language t.v.	1	5	2.68	1.47
I enjoy Spanish language movies	1	5	2.79	1.44

I enjoy reading books in Spanish	1	5	2.26	1.35
I write letters in Spanish	1	5	2.32	1.35
My thinking is done in the Spanish language	1	5	2.33	1.33
My contact with my Latin-American country of origin has been	1	5	2.28	1.22
My father identifies or identified himself as Latino	1	5	4.06	1.44
My mother identifies or identified herself as Latina	1	5	4.01	1.48
My friends while I was growing up were of Latino origin	1	5	3.77	1.20
My family cooks Latino foods	1	5	4.46	.83
My friends now are of Latino origin	1	5	3.77	1.02
I like to identify myself as Latino-American	1	5	3.57	1.56
I like to identify myself as (country of origin)	1	5	3.65	1.61

Anglo Orientation Subscale (AOS)*
(n = 215)   Cronbach alpha: .77

[1 = not at all; 2 = very little/not very much; 3 = moderately; 4 = much/very often; 5 = almost always/extremely often]

I enjoy English speaking	1	5	4.79	.50
I associate with Anglos	1	5	3.84	1.10
I enjoy listening to English language music	1	5	4.54	.76
I enjoy English language t.v.	1	5	4.43	.91
I enjoy English language movies	1	5	4.67	.67
I enjoy reading books in English	1	5	3.78	1.26
I write letters in English	1	5	4.28	1.07
My thinking is done in the English language	1	5	4.36	1.00

My contact w/the USA has been	1	5	4.63	.74
My friends while I was growing up were of Anglo origin	1	5	2.99	1.19
My friends now are of Anglo origin	1	5	3.09	1.05
I like to identify myself as an Anglo-American	1	5	1.47	.90
I like to identify myself as American	1	5	3.93	1.43

*Scales and items borrowed and adapted from Cuellar, Arnold, and Maldonado's (1995) Acculturation Rating Scale of Mexican Americans-II (ARMSA-II).
**Linear acculturation scores for each subject derived by subtracting the mean LOS score from the mean AOS score; will be utilized later in multivariate analyses.

As shown in Table 8, the ARSMA-II, as adapted, yielded a good internal consistency score (coefficient alpha) of .83 with this group of respondents. Likewise, the internal consistency scores for each independent subscale contained in the ARSMA-II were within an acceptable "comfort range" (DeVellis, 2003), with the Latino Orientation Scale yielding a very good alpha (.91), and the Anglo Orientation Scale yielding a respectable alpha score (.77). Possible summated scores ranged from a low of 30 to a high of 150, with higher scores indicating higher Anglo orientation. The mean score among this sample of Latinos was 107.90 for the summated items, and the standard deviation was 14.59. Given that the mean score is above the midway point, it is possible to conclude that this sample had a higher Anglo-orientation.

An acculturation score, which is a linear measure of subjects' acculturation, was obtained and computed for each subject (n = 229) by subtracting the mean LOS score from the mean AOS score. Negative scores indicated more Latino orientation while positive scores indicated more Anglo orientation. Survey respondents' acculturation

scores ranged from -2.27 to 3.50, with a mean score of .57 and a standard deviation of 1.07. An initial inspection of the means for each item in both subscales revealed that, with the exception of associations and ethnic identities, survey respondents scored higher on Anglo-orientation.

According to the segmented assimilation perspective (Portes and Zhou, 1993), there are several underlying factors that determine the assimilation trajectory, ultimately influencing negative or positive outcomes. These factors include: Level of assimilation/Americanization; socioeconomic status; and, a combination of strain and social control variables such as exposure to acculturation stress, attachments to parents and more traditional coethnics, access to human and social capital, perceived discrimination based on race/ethnicity, and residential location. The frequency and descriptive measures of the categorical and continuous independent variables related to constructs measuring segmented assimilation theory were considered, and are presented in Tables 9 through 12.

Table 9

Frequency Statistics for Categorical Independent Variables Representing Segmented Assimilation, Coding for Current Analysis

Variable	N	%
Race (RACE)		
(n = 253)		
White [0]	66	26
Other [1]	187	74
Residential location (RESIDENCE)		
(n = 256)		
Urban/Central City [1]	132	52
Suburban [2]	104	41
Rural [3]	20	7

Satisfaction w/treatment by US non-Latinos (PERCEPTMT)
(n = 314)

Very dissatisfied [1]	22	7.0
Somewhat dissatisfied [2]	58	18.5
Somewhat satisfied [3]	105	33.4
Very satisfied [4]	59	18.8

Perception of discrimination by non-Latinos in US (PERCEPDIS)
(n = 314)

Strongly Disagree [1]	21	6.7
Somewhat Disagree [2]	42	13.4
Somewhat Agree [3]	129	41.1
Strongly Agree [4]	50	15.9

Human Capital Variable:

Employment status (EMPSTAT)
(n = 193)

Yes [0]	110	57
No [1]	83	43

The variable representing race differs from what was discussed in the previous chapter; particularly, with respect to the categorical divisions. Originally, the race question was designed asking respondents to self-identify by selecting all that applied from four distinct categories (*White, Black, American Indian, Other Race*). If they selected the "Other" category, respondents were asked to write (type) in a response. The majority of respondents identified as "Other", and there was a great deal of dispersion in terms of the write in responses. Interestingly, in the write-in option, a substantial number of respondents identified as "Hispanic" or "Mexican", indicating their confusion with having to compartmentalize or categorize their racial identities. In corroboration with previous research (Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2002), there were also a fair amount of persons identifying as Mestizo (mixed American Indian and European ancestry).

In short, the data obtained was too difficult to decipher as recorded, and therefore, was transformed into a dichotomous variable (0=White /1=Other). Subjects identifying

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as any race other than White alone were recoded as "Other". As shown in Table 9, the

majority 187 (74%) of respondents self-identified as "Other" race (including multiracial,

the original "other" category, and any write-in responses), and 66 (26%) identified as

being White only. The primary reason for including the race variable in this study is

because research has indicated that skin color acts as a major barrier to integration,

exacerbating the risk for downward assimilation (Portes & Zhou, 1993). Thus, given the

information maintained in the analysis (whether a subject is White or non-White),

nothing valuable was lost in this transformation.

A small majority of subjects resided in an urban area or central city (n = 132 or

52%), with 104 (41%) in a suburban area, and 20 (7%) in a rural area. When asked to

indicate the extent to which they were satisfied by the way they are treated by non-Latino

Americans in the U.S., a substantial majority stated they were somewhat satisfied (n =

105 or 33.4%), 59 (18.8%) were very satisfied, 58 (18.5%) were somewhat dissatisfied,

and only 22 (7.0%) were very dissatisfied. By comparison, a majority of respondents (n

= 129 or 41.1%) somewhat agreed that persons of Latino/Hispanic origin are

discriminated against by non-Latino Americans in the U.S., whereas 50 (15.9%) strongly

agreed, 42 (13.4%) somewhat disagreed, and 21 (6.7%) strongly disagreed.

Initially, two variables were constructed to measure human capital. The first

variable examined educational attainment (EDATT). This variable was originally

operationalized into an open-ended question that asked respondents to indicate the

number of years of schooling completed. Conceptually, this question format proved to be

problematic, in that responses were vague, and therefore, lacked the clarity necessary to

conduct further analyses. For example, respondents were giving answers such as "Two

years", without distinguishing between years of college or years of school overall. As a result of too much variation in responses, the construct was recoded into a categorical variable, and responses were collapsed into three categories: (1) Below High School, (2) High School Graduate, and (3) College. Among respondents who answered the question, 62 (50%) had completed, or were attending college; 28 (23%) completed high school; and, 33 (27%) completed less than high school. Given that it was still difficult to categorize most of the responses based on the information provided, and that 121 cases (61%) were missing data, the variable was dropped from further analysis.

The second variable used to measure human capital was employment status (EMPSTAT), a dichotomous variable (Yes/No) that asked respondents to indicate their employment status at the time of the survey enumeration. The results revealed that a small majority of respondents (n = 110 or 57%) were employed, whereas 83 (43%) were not. It should be noted that, of the two human capital variables, only employment status was retained for use in multivariate analyses.

Table 10 shows the descriptive statistics and coding for original composite scales created to measure social class (SOCCLASS) and social capital (SOCAP). Two items were developed to measure social class. First, respondents were asked to describe their family standard of living. Responses were rated on a Likert-type scale which ranged from 1 to 5 (poor, nearly poor, just getting by, living comfortably and very well off). The second item asked respondents to compare the financial status of their families relative to other families living in their communities. This item was also rated on a five-point scale ranging from "much worse off" (1) to "much better off (5)." Respondents' scores on the scale ranged from a low of 3 to a high of 10 (possible range of 2-10), with a mean score

of 6.68 for the summated items, and a standard deviation of 1.22. Lower scores indicated

lower socioeconomic status.

Theoretically speaking, one of the most decisive factors of the assimilation

experience is social class. Particularly, socioeconomic status dictates the resources

available for social mobility, and hence, is a significant indicator of downward

assimilation (Portes & Zhou, 1993). As indicated by the Cronbach's alpha (.57) for the

social class scale, there was a low correlation for the two items (weak reliability). To

determine the importance of the information gained by asking these two questions,

however, both items were kept for further analysis and entered separately in the multiple

regression equation after appropriate transformations were made. Particularly, for each

of the two indicators of social class (absolute and relative), categories that had the lowest

number of cases were collapsed and recoded, resulting in two separate variables, each

with three categories (absolute: 1 = "poor" and "nearly poor", 2 = "just getting by", 3 =

"living comfortably" and "very well off"; relative: 1 = "much worse off" and "somewhat

worse off", 2 = "about the same", 3 = "better off" and "much better off").

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Independent Variables Representing Segmented Assimilation, Coding

for Current Analysis

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Social Class (SOCCLASS) (n = 193)	Cronbach alpha: .57			
	3	10	6.68	1.22
Indicators: Absolute deprivation [1 = Poor; 2 = Nearly Poor; 3 = Just Getting by; 4 = Living Comfortably; 5 = Very well off]***	1	5	3.54	.71

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	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Relative deprivation [1 = Much worse off; 2 = Somewhat worse off; 3 = About the same; 4 = Better off; 5 = Much better off]***	1	5	3.14	.75
Social Capital (SOCAP) Cronbach alpha: .64 (n = 255)	0	12	7.29	3.26
Indicators:				
(Recsocap 1) Had Latino friends over the home (past 30 days) [0 = not at all; 1 = about 1 time; 2 = 2-3 times; 3 = about once a week; 4 = more than once a week]	0	4	2.18	1.51
(Recsocap 2) Hung out with other Latinos in Public (past 30 days) [0 = not at all; 1 = about 1 time; 2 = 2-3 times; 3 = about once a week; 4 = more than once a week]	0	4	2.95	1.37
(Recsocap 3) Visited with relatives (past 30 days) [0 = not at all; 1 = about 1 time; 2 = 2-3 times; 3 = about once a week; 4 = more than once a week]	0	4	2.16	1.40
(Socap 4) Perception of co-ethnic Community Representation [1 = small to non-existent; 2 = moderate; 3 = strong]**	1	3	2.24	.73
(Socap 5) Participation in Religious services (past year) [0 = not at all; 1 = a few times; 2 = about 1-2 times a month; 3 = about once a week; 4 = more than once a week]**	0	4	1.18	1.15
(Socap 6) Extent of Religious influence [0 = strongly disagree, 1 = somewhat disagree, 2 = somewhat agree, 3 = strongly agree]**	0	3	1.47	1.07

**Indicates items omitted from the scale as originally proposed

***Indicates that categories for each of the two variables were collapsed and recoded prior to multivariate analyses (Absolute: 0=Poor, 1=Just getting by, 2=Above average; Relative: 0=Worse, 1=About the same, 2=Better off).

As shown in Table 10, there were six items initially utilized to measure social capital with this sample of Latino males. Inspection of item-analysis output from SPSS

revealed that the internal consistency of the scale was fairly low (Cronbach alpha = .58).

To determine whether the questionable alpha score was related to the number of items in

the scale or the extent of covariation among the items, the SPSS reliability procedure was

utilized to evaluate item-scale correlations.   Reliability statistics for social capital

revealed that the items with the lowest item-scale correlations were the extent of coethnic

representation in the community, and the two items related to religion (see Table 11).

Once these items were eliminated from the scale, and new reliability statistics were

examined for the three remaining items, the alpha increased to .64—an undesirable,

though acceptable, reliability score for this study.

Table 11

Inter-item Correlation Matrix for Original SOCAP scale

_____

Variable	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
(1) Socap 1	1.00	.632	.294	.061	.227	.020
(2) Socap 2	.632	1.00	.175	.080	.161	.018
(3) Socap 3	.294	.175	1.00	.241	.178	.080
(4) Socap 4	.061	.080	.241	1.00	.049	.009
(5) Socap 5	.227	.161	.170	.049	1.00	.487
(6) Socap 6	.020	.018	.008	.009	.487	1.00

Thus, the social capital scale utilized in multivariate analyses included only the

first three indicators as originally proposed: (1) Extent to which respondent had Latino

friends/acquaintances visit his home; (2) Extent to which respondent hung out with

Latino friends/acquaintances; and, (3) Extent to which respondent visited with relatives.

The importance of retaining the information contained in the social capital scale cannot

be overstated. In the context of the theoretical perspective guiding this study, a

segmented assimilation hypothesis proposes that the assimilation experience for children

of contemporary immigrants is largely dependent on their exposure to acculturation stress

and their access to resources or social controls that mediate stress-outcomes (Portes &

Zhou, 1993). The social capital scale was created to capture the extent of respondents'

associations with other Latinos (peers and family)—particularly, whether there is a

relationship between ethnic solidarity (high social capital) and attitudes toward violence.

Given that the three items having higher item-scale correlations were designed to directly

measure ethnic solidarity, the data maintained should sufficiently capture the construct of

interest. All three remaining items in the modified social capital scale were related to the

extent of interactions subjects had with other Latinos over the past 30 days, whether

relatives or peers. Responses were rated on five-point Likert-type scales, each ranging

from "not at all" to "more than once a week." The summated scores for the three-item

modified scale ranged from a low of 0 to a high of 12, with high scores indicating strong

ethnic solidarity. Respondents had a mean score of 7.29 for the summated items, and a

standard deviation of 3.26.

Descriptive statistics and the internal reliability coefficient for the 20-item

Acculturation Stress (STRAIN) scale are shown in Table 12. For each item, subjects

were asked to rate the degree of stress experienced based on a 4-point scale ranging from

1 (not stressful at all) to 4 (very stressful). Subjects also had the option of selecting zero

for any items that did not apply. The internal consistency estimate (alpha) for perceived

ratings of bicultural stressors among this sample of Latino males was .85. The summated

scores ranged from a low of 0 to a high of 56 (possible high of 80), with higher scores

indicating higher levels of acculturation stress or strain. An initial inspection of the data

indicated that the overall scores were relatively low (low stress) for this sample of Latino

males. Mean item scores were the highest (indicating high acculturation stress) for items

related to the use of language ("I have felt that I need to speak Spanish better"), and

discriminatory actions by other non-Latinos ("I feel unfcomfortable when others make

jokes about or put down people of my ethnic background"). Surprisingly, item means

were lowest (indicating lower levels of stress or strain) for items pertaining to

intergenerational conflicts and the pressure to belong to a gang. It should be noted that

there were a substantial number of cases where data was missing (n = 117) and these

cases were excluded from the analyses. While this may suggest a significant lack of

important information, the substantial proportion of respondents who selected "does not

apply" on a number of items may indicate that this sample of Latinos had not experienced

a great deal of acculturative stress. This point is revistited in the final chapter in

conjunction with sampling limitations.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Independent Variable Representing Acculturation Stress, Coding for Current Analysis

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Acculturation Stress (STRAIN) (n = 197)	Cronbach alpha: .85			
	0	56	23.54	11.70
Indicators: [1 = Not at all stressful; 2 = A little bit stressful; 3 = Quite a bit stressful; 4 = Very stressful; 0 = Does not apply]				
I have been treated badly because of my accent.				
	0	4	1.01	1.14
Because of family obligations I can't always do what I want.				
	0	4	1.61	1.30

I have worried about family members or friends having problems with immigration.

0	4	1.50	1.47

I have had problems at school because of my poor English.

0	4	.77	1.11

I do not feel comfortable with people whose culture is different from mine.

0	4	1.01	.87

I have felt pressure to learn Spanish.

0	4	1.32	1.18

I have felt that I need to speak Spanish better.

0	4	1.68	1.34

I have argued with my girlfriend/significant other over being too tradtional.

0	4	.85	1.03

My friends think I'm acting "White".

0	4	1.20	1.23

My parents feel I do not respect older people the way I should.

0	4	1.02	1.11

I feel unconfortable when others make jokes about or put down people
of my ethnic background

0	4	1.83	1.26

I have argued with family members because I do not want to
do some tradtions.

0	4	1.14	1.15

I have had to translate/interpret for my parents.

0	4	1.11	1.15

I have felt lonely and isolated because my family does not stick together.

0	4	1.15	1.25

I have felt that others do not accept me because of my ethnic group.

0	4	1.12	1.08

I have had to help my parents by explaining how to do things in the U.S.

0	4	.89	1.09

I feel like I can't do what most American kids do because of my parents' culture.

0	4	.85	1.00

I feel like belonging to a gang is part of representing my ethnic group.

0	4	.48	.81

Sometimes I do not understand why people from different ethnic backgrounds
act a certain way.

0	4	1.50	1.20

Sometimes I feel that it will be harder to succeed because of my ethnic background.

0	4	1.50	1.26

Dependent Variable

The Attitudes Toward Violence Scale (PROVIOLENT), constructed of original
and borrowed items, was designed to measure respondents' acceptance of violence in
three contexts: General interpersonal violence (14 items), male-on-female violence (3
items), and general intimate partner violence (5 items). Respondents were asked to rate
the extent to which they agree with each of the 22 statements based on a four-point scale,
with values ranging from (1)"Strongly Disagree" to (4)"Strongly Agree." Of the 314
total respondents, data were missing for 134 cases. Only cases having full data were kept
for analysis. Descriptive statistics for the dependent variable are presented in Table 13.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Dependent Variable Representing Attitudes Toward Violence, Coding

for Current Analysis

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Attitudes Toward Violence (PROVIOLENT)*		Cronbach alpha: .81		
(n = 180)				
	25	75	39.03	7.88
Subscales				
General Interpersonal Violence (GIV):		Cronbach alpha: .78		
(n = 184)				
	17	49	29.39	6.53

[1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Agree; 4= Strongly Agree]

It's okay to use a weapon when fighting.	1	4	1.42	.72
I could see myself joining a gang.	1	4	1.25	.73
It's okay to use violence to get what you want.	1	4	1.26	.61
I try to stay away from places where violence is likely.**	1	4	3.41	.90
People who use violence get respect.	1	4	1.59	.93
Carrying a gun or knife would help me feel safer.	1	4	1.89	1.03
If a person hits you, you should hit them back.	1	4	2.88	.97
It's okay to beat up a person for badmouthing me or my family.	1	4	2.16	1.04
It's okay to carry a gun or knife if you live in a rough neighborhood.	1	4	2.06	1.07
It's okay to do whatever it takes to protect myself.	1	4	3.33	.80
It's good to carry a gun with you at all times.	1	4	1.55	.91
Parents should tell their children to use violence if necessary.	1	4	1.82	.96
If someone tries to start a fight with you, you should walk away.**	1	4	2.04	.96
I'm afraid of getting hurt by violence. **	1	4	2.78	1.14
<u>Acceptance of Male-on-Female Violence (MOF):</u> (n = 189)		Cronbach alpha:	.59	
	3	10	3.47	1.10

[1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Agree; 4= Strongly Agree]

It's OK to hit a woman to get her to do what I want.	1	4	1.06	.36
Most women like to be pushed around by men.	1	4	1.31	.69
The male should <u>not</u> allow the female the same amount of freedom he has.	1	4	1.12	.37

Acceptance of General Intimate Partner Violence (GIPV): Cronbach alpha: .75 (n = 189)				
	5	17	6.10	2.01

[1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Agree; 4= Strongly Agree]

Violence between intimate partners can improve the relationship.	1	4	1.11	.42
There are times when violence between intimate partners is okay.	1	4	1.15	.47
Sometimes violence is the only way to express your feelings.	1	4	1.29	.70
Some couples must use violence to solve their problems.	1	4	1.18	.52
Violence between intimate partners is a personal matter and people should not interfere.	1	4	1.38	.69

*Composite scale consisting of a combination of borrowed and original items measuring the extent of acceptance/approval of three types of violence: General Interpersonal Violence (see Funk, Elliott, Urman, Flores, and Scott, 1999), Male-on-Female Violence, and General Intimate Partner Violence (see Foshee, Fothergill, and Stuart, 1992).
** Denotes items that are reverse scored.

Table 13 shows the three subscales and descriptive statistics on each item. The

Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the broader attitudes toward violence scale was .81,

indicating good internal consistency among the items. Summary statistics for the 22

items comprising the full scale indicated scores that ranged from 25 to 75 (possible range

of 22 to 88), with a mean score of 39.03 and a standard deviation of 7.88. Mean item

scores were highest (indicating higher pro-violent attitudes) for items agreeing with the

use of violence as a response to violent actions or as a means of self-defense. The lowest

mean items scores were for items approving the use of physical violence against a woman

and acceptance of intimate partner violence in general.

As previously discussed, the attitudes toward violence scale was comprised of

three subscales including interpersonal violence, general intimate partner violence, and

male-on-female violence. Two of the three subscales were found to have good internal

consistency: general interpersonal violence ($\alpha = .78$) and general intimate partner

violence ($\alpha = .75$). The alpha level for the male-on-female subscale, however, was .59,

which is below the acceptable range (DeVellis, 2003). The instant research study seeks

to maintain this subscale in future analyses for three reasons. First, the alpha for this

subscale may be low due to the fact that it only consists of three items. Second, a

preliminary review of the regression analysis has suggested that there is a significant

relationship between male superiority (machismo indicator) and male-on-female

violence, and statistical significance was achieved with only three items in the subscale.

Third, the alpha values on the two other subscales and the broader attitudes toward

violence scale fall within an acceptable range for research purposes. For all of these

reasons, the full scale was maintained for future analysis.

Bivariate Results

Once the data were properly coded for regression analysis (dummy-coding

nominal and ordinal level variables), bivariate correlations were run to identify

significant relationships between the outcome variable (PROVIOLENT) and the

independent variables. Particularly, the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation

(Pearson's r) was examined for each independent and dependent variable combination to

determine the existence, strength, and direction of statistically significant associations.

While bivariate correlations do not establish a causal relationship, the existence of a

strong and significant correlation certainly provides a helpful starting point to further

exploration through multivariate analysis (Walker & Maddan, 2005). Pearson's *r* values

fall between -1 (perfect negative relationship) and +1 (perfect positive relationship), with

a value of 0 generally indicating no relationship between two variables. For the purposes

of this study, however, only associations which were significantly correlated with the

dependent variable (p-value < .05) are reported.

Results revealed that seven of the seventeen independent variables were

significantly correlated with the dependent variable (PROVIOLENT) at the .05 level.

For example, a negative correlation was found between perception of treatment by U.S.

non-Latinos and attitudes toward violence (*r* = -.220). This result suggests that Latinos

who are satisfied by the overall manner in which U.S. non-Latinos treat them tend to hold

less pro-violent attitudes. In addition, positive correlations were found between cultural

agreement with alcohol consumption (*r* = .178), alcohol consumption/past 30 days (*r* =

.192), past year exposure to alcohol-related violence (*r* = .163), social capital (*r* = .224),

and the two machismo indicators—masculinity (*r* = .299), and male superiority (*r* =

.377). These results indicate that Latinos who support the regular consumption of alcohol

and personally consume excessive amounts, and who have been exposed to recent

episodes of alcohol-related violence, maintain close ethnic ties, and subscribe to an

exaggerated sense of masculinity tend to support violence in a number of circumstances.

It is important to note that the highest correlation between any of the variables in

the study was found between the second machismo indicator (male superiority) and pro-

violence (*r* = .377; *p* = .000). Considering that the machismo indicators in the survey

were assessing a cultural predisposition for hyper-masculine views toward violence

(particularly against women), it was expected that these two variables would be moderately correlated with the dependent variable.

Multivariate Analysis

As indicated in Chapter four, Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression was the planned analysis for predicting attitudes toward violence using a number of assimilation, cultural, and socio-demographic factors that have been found to influence maladaptive outcomes, particularly among contemporary Latinos living in the United States. Corresponding with the research questions proposed for this study, three separate (and one partial in Model two) OLS regression models were utilized to address the hypotheses provided in Chapter three.[6] To account for multicollinearity, the variation inflation factor (VIF) score was assessed for the variables contained in each of the regression models. According to Bachman and Paternoster (1997), the general rule of thumb indicates that a VIF score higher than four signifies multicollinearity between these variables. All independent variables in all the models had VIF scores well below the recommended cut-off value of four, indicating no concern for multicollinearity.

Model One: To What Extent Do Latinos Support the Use of Violence, and Does This Differ Depending on Their Level of Assimilation?

To measure endorsement of violence, which is the first part of research question one, this study utilized a combination of 22 items from three subscales to create a total attitudes toward violence scale (see Table 13). A total score was computed by adding

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[6] Given the exclusion of variables related to marital status, coethnic representation, educational attainment and religion, hypotheses 6, 8, 9, and 13 were not analyzed.

together response scores for each of the 22 items. Higher scale scores indicated stronger pro-violent attitudes. As shown in Table 13, the mean score for this scale was 39.03, with a standard deviation of 7.88, and a range of 25 to 75. The 14-item subscale, "general interpersonal violence", had a mean score of 29.39, a standard deviation of 6.53, and a range of 17 to 49. The 3-item additive subscale, "male-on-female violence", had a mean score of 3.47, a standard deviation of 1.10, and a range of 3 to 10. The third subscale included in the total attitudes toward violence scale is "general intimate partner violence". The mean score for this 5-item scale was 6.10, with a standard deviation of 2.01, and a range of 5 to 17.

As previously discussed, item means and standard deviations were also calculated from the responses of the 180 Latino males ages 18-25 who completed the scales that comprised the dependent variable—attitudes toward violence (see Table 13). When comparing mean scores across subscales, it is interesting to note that item scores were highest (indicating stronger pro-violent attitudes) for items endorsing the use of violence as a response to violent actions or as a means of self-defense ("It's ok to do whatever it takes to protect myself"). Conversely, item means were lowest (indicating weaker pro-violent attitudes) for items endorsing the use of physical violence against a woman ("It's OK to hit a woman to get her to do what I want") and acceptance of intimate partner violence in general ("Violence between intimate partners can improve the relationship"). These results indicate that there was minimal endorsement of violence more broadly and across all three violence types (general interpersonal, male-on-female, and general intimate partner violence). The following section addresses whether attitudes scores for this sample of Latino males varied depending on assimilation level.

Based upon previous research, the first hypothesis argues that Latino males with higher levels of assimilation are more likely to approve of violence than less assimilated Latino males. Thus, the first model was used to examine the relationship between assimilation level and attitudes toward violence. The dependent variable was PROVIOLENT (composite score on attitudes toward violence), and the independent variable was ALEVEL (linear acculturation score on ARSMA-II, assimilation level). The results of this model are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

OLS Regression Results for Assimilation Level and Attitudes Toward Violence (Model 1) (n = 180)

Independent Variable	Unstandardized Slopes (SE)	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	T
ALEVEL	-.350 (.546)	-.048	-.640

R-square = .002
F = .410
Standard Error (SE) = 7.894

NOTE: *Significant at the .05 level
**Significant at the .01 level

The first step in OLS regression analysis is to determine whether the model is statistically significant—meaning, the probability that the combined effect of all the independent variables on the dependent variable in the model could have happened by chance (Walker & Maddan, 2005). A model's significance can be determined by examining the probability associated with the *F*-statistic or score (*F*-test). The null hypothesis for the *F*-test states that all slopes in the regression equation are equal to zero. A significant *F*-score (less than .05) provides evidence that at least one of the slopes in the regression equation does not equal zero. In other words, at least one independent variable in the model is statistically significant.

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For Model one, the probability associated with F ($df = 1, 178$) was .523, indicating that the relationship between level of assimilation and attitudes toward violence for this model was not statistically significant ($p > .05$). Thus, the probability that the results of this model happened by chance is greater than .05, and therefore, contrary to hypothesis one, Latino males with higher levels of assimilation were not more likely to approve of violence than those who were less assimilated.

Model 2: Does the Assimilation-Violence Relationship Differ Depending on the Type of Assimilation?

Model two examined the indicators of segmented assimilation theory (race, residential location, social class, social capital, acculturation stress or strain, perceptions of discrimination and overall mistreatment, and employment status) against attitudes toward violence, and corresponded to hypotheses two through eleven. Hypothesis two concerned the likelihood that Latinos who experienced high acculturation stress would be more inclined to support the use of violence, regardless of assimilation level. Although assimilation level was found to be an insignificant predictor of violent attitudes in the previous model, two separate regression analyses were performed prior to running the full model. The first regression assessed hypothesis two by regressing assimilation level and acculturation stress against attitudes; the second was performed to test attitudes only against acculturation stress. Findings from this partial model are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

OLS Regression Results 1 and 2 for Acculturation Stress, Assimilation Level, and Attitudes Toward

Violence (Partial Model 2) (N = 173)

Independent Variable	Regression 1			Regression 2		
	b	SE	β	b	SE	β
ALEVEL	- .186	1.582	- .025			
STRAIN	.058	.055	.083	.063	.053	1.183

R-square = .009   R-square = .008
F = .747 (p = .475) F = 1.400 (p = .238)
Standard Error (SE) = 7.947   Standard Error (SE) = 7.926

NOTE: *Significant at the .05 level
          **Significant at the .01 level

Results of regression one indicated that no significant effect was found for pro-

violent attitude outcomes based on the independent variables of assimilation level and

acculturation stress (p = .475). The slope for assimilation level was -.186 (p = .750), and

the slope for acculturation stress (STRAIN) was .058 (p = .299). When assimilation level

was removed from the model (Regression analysis two), the R-square actually decreased

slightly (R^2 = .008), and acculturation stress was not found to be significantly related to

attitudes toward violence (p = .238), thus rejecting hypothesis two, which predicted that

attitudes toward violence are associated with acculturation stress in Latinos at varying

assimilation levels. To assess the remaining predictions based on this study's guiding

theory, the following model incorporates other theoretical factors.

Based on a review of contemporary assimilation theory (Portes & Zhou, 1993), it

was hypothesized (H_a 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, and 11) that racial identity (non-white), low socio-

economic status, urban residence, unemployment, weak social capital (ties to one's ethnic

group), and perceived exposure to discrimination and overall negative treatment by non-Latinos in the United States would be associated with more pro-violent attitudes in Latino males. The overall model, which included nine segmented assimilation variables, indicated that only one of the variables had a significant impact on attitudes toward violence. Findings from the full model are presented in Table 16.

Table 16

OLS Regression Results for Relationship between Segmented Assimilation Variables (Assimilation Type) and Attitudes Toward Violence (Model 2) (N = 164)

Independent Variable	Unstandardized Slopes (SE)	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	T
STRAIN	.035 (.057)	.051	.617
RACE	.269 (1.362)	.015	.198
SOCCLASS			
Absolute	-.439 (1.139)	-.032	-.385
Relative	-1.012 (.985)	-.085	1.027
SOCAP	.525 (.193)	.216**	2.719
RESIDENCE	-.605 (1.252)	-.038	-.483
PERCEPTMT	-1.432 (.761)	-.162	-1.883
PERCEPTDIS	-.206 (.796)	-.022	-.258
EMPSTAT	1.889 (1.245)	.118	1.517

     R-square = .109
     F = 2.102
     Standard Error (SE) = 7.670

NOTE: *Significant at the .05 level
**Significant at the .01 level

Model two had an *F*-statistic of 2.102 (*df* = 9, 154), and a *p* value of .032, indicating that at least one of the variables in the model was statistically significant. Once significance is established, the next step in regression analysis is to determine the strength of the overall model by looking at the value of the multiple correlation coefficient—or R Square (R^2) (Walker & Maddan, 2005). The R-square reports the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that is explained or accounted for by

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the independent variables. The R-square ranges in value from 0 to 1, with the values closer to 1 indicating a higher correlation between the dependent variable and independent variables in the mode. The R-square for this model was .109; therefore, the overall multiple regression model with nine segmented assimilation predictors explained approximately 11% of the variance in attitudes toward violence.

Upon further review of the unstandardized regression coefficients (b), only one out of the nine theoretically-based independent variables was found to be statistically significant. Particularly, social capital was found to be associated with attitudes toward violence. However, contrary to expectations, there was a positive relationship between the variables. The slope for the social capital scale was .525 ($p = .007$), indicating that every one unit increase in the social capital scale results in a .525 increase in pro-violent attitudes. This finding was inconsistent with hypothesis ten, which predicted that Latinos who did not maintain strong relationships with family and other Latino peers were more likely to subscribe to pro-violent attitudes than those having close ethnic ties. Although hypothesis ten was not supported in terms of the predicted direction of the relationship, the finding is interesting in that it implies the existence of some other possible relational factor within Latino groups that may influence pro-violent attitudes. While the other eight segmented assimilation variables did not reach significance, the results are discussed below in the context of the hypotheses proposed in this study.

According to Portes and Zhou (1993), one of the primary factors that may lead to downward assimilation, and hence, maladaptive outcomes, is race. Hypothesis three specifically examined whether Latinos who identified as non-white were more likely to support the use of violence than white Latinos. In the bivariate analysis, race was not

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found to be significantly correlated to attitudes toward violence. When other assimilation factors were controlled for in this model, race remained insignificant ($b = .269$; $p = .844$). Although race had a positive coefficient, suggesting that non-white Latinos scored higher on pro-violence, it was not a significant factor associated with attitudes toward violence.

The segmented assimilation perspective further suggests that another primary factor influencing assimilation outcomes is socioeconomic status. To capture the relationship between low socioeconomic status and maladaptive outcomes, hypothesis four predicted that Latinos living in low income households (transformed from a continuous scale measure into two variables: absolute and relative deprivation) would be more likely to support the use of violence. Although each coefficient was negative (Absolute: $b = -.439$; Relative: $b = -1.012$), indicating that Latinos who perceived their socioeconomic status as above average (generally and when compared to other families living in close proximity) scored lower on the attitudes toward violence scale, both social class variables failed to reach statistical significance in both bivariate and multivariate analyses ($p = .701$; $p = .306$, respectively).

Hypothesis five predicted that Latinos living in urban areas would be more likely to support the use of violence as compared to those living in other areas (suburban or rural). While results indicated that respondents who lived in urban areas were less likely to subscribe to pro-violent attitudes, the coefficient for residential location did not reach statistical significance for this sample of Latino males ($b = -.605$; $p = .630$). This finding, although not significant, is surprising in that it is contrary to expectations. One explanation might be that Latinos living in more rural or suburban areas have less access

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to social capital and ethnic ties, and therefore, are exposed to greater amounts of acculturation stress as a result.

A segmented assimilation perspective also suggests that access to human capital may play a significant role in the assimilation trajectory for most contemporary children of immigrants. Given the exclusion of educational attainment because of measurement problems, only employment status was evaluated in this context. In corroboration with hypothesis seven, results indicate that unemployed Latinos scored higher on pro-violence. However, given the lack of statistical significance ($p = .131$), there is no support for the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 11 predicted that Latino males who perceive they are discriminated against and generally not accepted by non-Latino Americans are more likely to approve of violence. To assess this prediction, two constructs were examined—perception of discrimination and perception of overall mistreatment. Each of these constructs were represented as two separate ordinal-level variables (PERCEPTMT and PERCEPDIS), with values ranging from zero to three on a Likert-type scale. Both of the coefficients related to perceptions of discrimination and mistreatment were positively associated with higher scores on the attitudes toward violence scale (See Table 16), showing some support for hypothesis 11. However, while perception of treatment by non-Latinos in the U.S. approached significance ($p = .062$), neither indicator had a significant effect on attitudes toward violence.

Model Three: Is the Assimilation-Violence Relationship Consistent Across a Number of Demographic and Cultural Characteristics?

In addition to testing the effects of assimilation level and each component of segmented assimilation perspective on attitudes toward violence, all the variables related to the assimilation experience were placed into a single model to examine the overall explanatory strength of assimilation while accounting for the mediating effects of several socio-demographic and cultural characteristics. It is argued that, not only are individual characteristics influential in the development of an attitudinal foundation for violence, but that such characteristics may ultimately influence the assimilation experience to impact the extent to which individuals are able to successfully navigate through the process and develop a healthy ethnic identity.

The full model includes the following independent variables: assimilation level, acculturation stress, race, two indicators of social class, social capital, residential location, perception of mistreatment, perception of discrimination, employment status, age, two indicators of machismo (transformed from a continuous score into two separate variables), and cultural agreement with alcohol consumption, extent of alcohol consumption, witnessing alcohol-related violence, and nativity. The results of Model three are presented in Table 17.The F-test indicates that the model is significant (F=3.160, df = 17, 128; p =.000) and that at least one independent variable is significant in the model. The R-square for the full model is .296. This indicates that the independent variables in this model account for approximately 30% of the variation in attitudes toward violence. It can also be stated that the prediction error is reduced by about 30% when taking into account the independent variables in the full model rather

than using the mean to predict attitudes toward violence. The addition of the socio-demographic and cultural variables increased the variance explained by 18.7% from the previous model.

Based on a review of the literature related to assimilation and violence (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Vigil, 2002), it was hypothesized (H_a 12-17) that various socio-demographic and cultural characteristics may mediate the relationship between assimilation and attitudes toward violence. Of the newly added variables, two of them were found to have significant slope estimates: male superiority and perception of treatment by U.S. non-Latinos. Specific findings related to these significant indicators are discussed below, in the context of proposed hypotheses. The 15 other socio-demographic and cultural factors failed to achieve significance at the .05 level. It should be noted that social capital failed to reach significance in the final model, although the relationship remained in the same positive direction.

Table 17

Full OLS Regression Model (Model 3) (n = 146)

Independent Variable	Unstandardized Slopes (SE)	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	T
ALEVEL	-.015 (.684)	-.002	-.021
STRAIN	.048 (.059)	.069	.814
RACE	- .339 (1.382)	-.019	-.246
SOCCLASS			
Absolute	- .984 (1.229)	-.072	-.801
Relative	- .802 (1.009)	-.066	-.795
SOCAP	.305 (.202)	.124	1.509
RESIDENCE	- 1.302 (1.254)	-.082	-1.038
PERCEPTMT	- 1.610 (.823)	-.178*	-1.956
PERCEPTDIS	.032 (.860)	.003	.037
EMPSTAT	.385 (1.3339)	.024	.288
AGE	-.545 (.315)	- .151	-1.727
MACHO			
Masculinity	.744 (.676)	.099	1.101
Male Superiority	2.723 (.807)	.304**	3.375
NATIVITY	-.664 (1.613)	- .036	-.412
ALCOHOL	-.886 (1.363)	.056	.650
ALCONSUMP	.562 (.514)	.097	1.094
DRINKVIOLENT	-.105 (.621)	-.013	-.169

R-square = .296
F = 3.160**
Standard Error (SE) = 7.075

NOTE: *Significant at the .05 level
**Significant at the .01 level

With the results of the full model, it is possible to interpret the strength of these significant variables on the dependent variable by assessing the standardized coefficients or beta values (β). Standardization makes it possible to compare across independent variables regardless of their level of measurement (e.g., age in years versus race measured as white or non-white). The beta value for the second machismo indicator, male superiority, is .304 which is the largest among the independent variables in the model. This indicates that male superiority has the strongest effect on attitudes toward

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violence. Perception of treatment by U.S. non-Latinos is the next strongest predictor of attitudes toward violence with a beta value of .178. Similar to the discussion of insignificant findings related to Model two, the remainder of this section presents the results as they relate to the hypotheses proposed in this study.

Hypothesis 12 predicted that, regardless of assimilation, younger Latino males would be more likely to support the use of violence than older Latino males. Although previous research studies have found younger males to be more prone to violence, age was not found to be significant independent variable in the full model. Results should be interpreted conservatively, however, given the lack of variability in terms of the selected age group for inclusion in this study (18-25). Notwithstanding, while age was found to be negatively associated with attitudes toward violence (i.e., older Latinos were less likely to approve of violence) this relationship was not significant at the .05 level ($b = -.545$, $p = .087$). These results suggest that hypothesis 12 was not supported in this study.

Hypothesis 14 suggested that, regardless of the assimilation factors, U.S.-born Latino males would score higher on the attitudes toward violence scale than foreign-born Latino males. The hypothesis was based on the plethora of research studies that found generational status to be positively associated with involvement with crime and delinquency (Berry, 2005; Bui, 2009; Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Hwang & Wood, 2008; Martinez & Lee, 2000; Portes, Fernandez-Kelly & Haller 2005; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Smokowski & Bacallao, 2009; Vigil, 2002; Zhou, 1997). In corroboration with previous research, nativity was found to be negatively associated with attitudes toward violence ($b = -.664$; $p = .681$) (i.e., foreign-born Latinos were less likely to support the use of violence). Although the association was in the expected direction, it did not reach

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statistical significance at the .05 level, and therefore, the hypothesis was not supported by these data.

Considerable research data have shown that violence is directly and indirectly linked with excessive alcohol consumption, but particularly among Latino males. (Caetano, et al., 2007; Klevens, 2007; Murdaugh, et al., 2004; *see* Worby & Organista, 2007, for a review of the literature). Based on a review of the literature, hypothesis 15 predicted that Latinos who consume excessive amounts of alcohol regularly were more likely to support the use of violence than Latino males with little to no alcohol usage. To explore this potential relationship, the instant study assessed perceptions of a cultural agreement with alcohol consumption, and further, the extent to which respondents consumed alcohol in the past 30 days. Overall, the findings suggested that, after controlling for all of the independent variables in the study, neither of the two alcohol consumption predictors were significant at the .05 level. In fact, the slope for cultural support of regular alcohol consumption was .886, indicating a weak positive relationship between this variable and attitudes toward violence ($p = .517$). Furthermore, the relationship between excessive consumption (i.e. consuming alcohol more than once per week over the past 30 days) and higher scores on pro-violence was positive, but statistically insignificant ($b = .562$; $p = .276$). Thus, there was no support for hypothesis 15.

Hypothesis 16 argues that Latinos who are exposed to alcohol-related violence more frequently will be more likely to support the use of violence in various circumstances. Alcohol-related violence failed to achieve significance in the multivariate analysis ($p = .866$). Further, contrary to research expectations, alcohol-related violence

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was found to be negatively associated with attitudes toward violence ($b = -.105$), indicating that respondents with more past-year exposure to alcohol-related violence scored lower on the attitudes toward violence scale. Again, this relationship was not significant at the .05 level. Consequently, these results suggest that hypothesis 16 was not supported in the current study.

Based on prior research findings that found machismo to be strongly associated with male dominance, protectiveness toward females, and violence among Latino males (Paddock, 1975; Sanderson, Coker, Roberts, Tortolero, & Reininger, 2004), the final hypothesis for this study proposed that the assimilation-violence relationship will be mediated by machismo. Particularly, the hypothesis suggested that, while controlling for assimilation predictors, Latino males who adhere to more traditional gender roles that support male dominance are more likely to support the use of violence—specifically, intimate partner violence. Given the unacceptable reliability coefficient associated with the original scale measure of machismo, the two indicators (masculinity and male superiority) were entered separately into the regression model.

As shown in Table 18, both indicators of machismo were found to be in the hypothesized direction (masculinity: $b = .744$; male superiority: $b = 2.723$); however, only male superiority achieved statistical significance at the .01 level ($p = .001$). This indicates that, for every one unit increase in male superiority (i.e., moving from disagreeing to agreeing that men are superior to women in many ways) there is a 2.723 increase in pro-violent attitudes. Thus, these results indicate only partial support for hypothesis 17, indicating to some extent that Latinos who subscribe to traditional gender roles that support male dominance over women are more likely to support the use of

violence. The accuracy of the prediction in terms of the type of violence associated with machismo is addressed in more detail in the following discussion related to the dependent variable.

Additional Tests: Types of Violence

The preceding discussion presented results of analyses performed to examine relationships between a host of independent variables and one outcome variable, global attitudes toward violence. As previously discussed, the outcome or dependent variable was measured as a continuous score based on summated responses on a composite scale consisting of three subscales corresponding to three types of violence: general interpersonal violence, general intimate partner violence, and male-on-female violence. However, measuring violence as one all-inclusive score may mask important information concerning the effects that multiple assimilation and socio-demographic factors may have on varying types of violence. In short, there may be differences in the extent of approval depending on the types of violence presented. To determine whether any significant differences existed, nine additional regressions were performed. First, the dependent variable was transformed into three separate dependent variables, each pertaining to its respective subscale (i.e., general interpersonal violence, male-on-female violence, and general intimate partner violence). The three previous models were then run, but against each of the new dependent violence variables. The results of these analyses are presented in Tables 18-20, and the related discussion is divided into three sections, each corresponding to the three violence subscales.

Table 18

OLS Regression Results for Individual and Full Models, General Interpersonal Violence

Independent Variable	1		2		3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
ALEVEL	-.088	.449			.101	.556
Assimilation type (theoretical)						
RACE			.341	1.122	-.379	1.112
SOCAP			.390**	.160	.191	.163
SOCCLASS						
Absolute			-1.008	.920	- 1.167	.953
Relative			-.473	.819	-.390	.819
STRAIN			-.001	.047	.015	.047
RESIDENCE			-.559	1.034	- 1.147	1.011
PERCEPTMT			-.695	.633	- .839	.667
PERCEPDIS			.263	.646	.528	.677
EMPSTAT			.635	1.024	- .501	1.066
Socio-demographic/Cultural						
AGE					-.393	.256
NATIVITY					-.856	1.312
MACHO						
Masculinity					.838	.544
Male Superiority					2.034**	.642
ALCOHOL					1.334	1.095
ALCONSUMP					.294	.413
DRINKVIOLENT					.036	.503

R-square = .000	R-square = .079	R-square = .274**
F = .039 (*df* = 1, 182)	F = 1.480 (*df* = 9, 156)	F = 2.886 (*df* = 17, 130)
SE = 6.550	SE = 6.391	SE = 5.760
(n = 184)	(n = 166)	(n = 148)

NOTE: *Significant at the .05 level
**Significant at the .01 level

General Interpersonal Violence

As presented and discussed in Chapter 4, the general interpersonal violence

subscale contained 15 items designed to measure the extent to which respondents approve

of violence against strangers or acquaintances, reactive violence, and weapon carrying.

Based on a review of the literature (Cao, 2005; Levitt, 2002; Nagasawa, Qian, & Wong, 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Warner, 2007; Zhou & Bankston, 1994), it was presumed that level of assimilation, stressors related to acculturation, and a number of other socio-demographic and cultural characteristics would influence the extent to which Latinos approve of violence in general, but particularly, acquaintance or stranger violence. Similar to the previous analyses of the full attitudes toward violence scale, model one, which measured assimilation level against general interpersonal violence, did not reach significance at the .05 level. In contrast with the outcome using the full attitudes toward violence scale, model two was not significant. However, social capital was still found to be a significant indicator against general intimate partner violence ($b = .390$; $p = .016$), though to a slightly lesser effect.

Perhaps the most significant difference was found in the last model, which examined all of the independent variables from the previous model three against general interpersonal violence. Again, the full model included assimilation level, 9 indicators of segmented assimilation (assimilation type), and the 7 socio-demographic and cultural characteristics. The R-square for the full model is .274. This indicates that the independent variables in this model account for 27.4% of the variation in general interpersonal violence specifically. It can also be stated that the prediction error is reduced by about 27% when taking into account the independent variables in the model rather than using the mean to predict support for the use of interpersonal violence. Particularly, measuring responses based only on the general interpersonal violence subscale scale actually decreased the variance explained by about 3% from the full violence model. In addition, the F-test indicates that the model is significant at the .01

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level (F=2.886, p <.000). Only one of the previously mentioned significant variables was still found to be significant when regressed against the general interpersonal violence scale: male superiority (p = .002). The implications of these findings will be discussed in more detail in the final chapter.

General Intimate Partner Violence

This five-item subscale consisted of statements related to the approval of intimate partner or couple violence specifically; consequently, it has been referred to as the general intimate partner violence subscale. The primary reason for the inclusion of this particular measure is because recent findings have suggested that, because of acculturation strains and conflicts, more assimilated Latinos experience increased levels of domestic violence (Caetano, Ramisetty-Mikler, Caetano Vaeth, & Harris, 2007; Klevens, 2007; Lown & Vega, 2001; Sorenson & Telles, 1991). Table 19 presents the results of the findings for each model.

Table 19

OLS Regression Results for Individual and Full Models, General Intimate Partner Violence

Independent Variable	1		2		3	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
ALEVEL	-.088	.449			-.072	.192
Assimilation type (theoretical)						
RACE			.329	.347	-.331	.392
SOCCAP			.056	.049	.037	.057
SOCCLASS						
Absolute			.143	.284	-.076	.337
Relative			-.434	.252	-.368	.286
STRAIN			.018	.014	.016	.016
RESIDENCE			.082	.320	-.002	.355
PERCEPTMT			-.406*	.195	-.402	.230
PERCEPDIS			-.159	.199	-.234	.234
EMPSTAT			.683	.315	.486	.376
Socio-demographic/Cultural						
AGE					-.123	.089
NATIVITY					.069	.457
MACHO						
Masculinity					-.097	.185
Male Superiority					.446*	.219
ALCOHOL					-.380	.384
ALCONSUMP					.137	.144
DRINKVIOLENT					-.068	.177

R-square = .009	R-square = .102*	R-square = .151
F = 1.744 (*df* = 1, 187)	F = 2.012 (*df* = 9, 160)	F = 1.402 (*df* = 17, 134)
SE = 2.003	SE = 1.993	SE = 2.048
(n = 189)	(n = 170)	(n = 152)

NOTE: *Significant at the .05 level
       **Significant at the .01 level

Again, model one failed to reach significance at the .05 level, indicating no association between assimilation level and general intimate partner violence. However, similar to the previous analyses, model two did reach statistical significance, with an *F*-statistic of 2.012 and a *p*-value of .041. The R-square for Model 2 is .102, which is slightly lower than when utilizing the full attitudes toward violence scale. It should be

noted that social capital did not reach statistical significance when regressed against intimate partner violence, although the relationship remained in the same direction ($b =$ .056). Interestingly, however, perception of treatment by non-U.S. Latinos was found to be negatively associated with intimate partner violence. The slope for this variable is -.406 ($p = $ .039), indicating that, for every one unit increase in perception of treatment (i.e., moving from not very satisfied to very satisfied), there is a.406 decrease in approval of intimate partner violence. This suggests that Latinos who are satisfied by the manner in which they are received by non-Latinos in the U.S. tend to disagree with the use of violence against an intimate partner. None of the other variables in the model produced significant slopes.

Particularly, although it approached significance, perception of treatment did not remain statistically significant at the .05 level in model three ($b = $ -.402; $p = $ .084). Conversely, similar to the previous analysis using the full violence scale, the inclusion of socio-demographic and cultural variables produced one additional significant slope: male superiority ($b = $ .446; $p = $ .044). As shown in Table 19, the t-values and corresponding significance tests for the full model and for the remainder of the variables indicated that, by and large, socio-demographic and cultural variables were not significantly associated with approval of intimate partner violence. Thus, returning to Hypothesis 17, it should be noted that the relationship between machismo and attitudes toward violence was not wholly supported in this analysis. Specifically, while it is true that the introduction of male superiority partially mediated the relationship between assimilation and violence in these analyses (by reducing the effects of assimilation variables), there is no support that

Latinos who subscribe to an exaggerated sense of masculinity are more likely to approve of intimate partner violence specifically.

Male-on- Female Violence

The last subscale, male-on-female violence, was comprised of only three items designed to measure the extent to which Latino respondents agreed with the use of violence to achieve male dominance over women more generally, not necessarily an intimate partner. The expectation was that less assimilated Latinos would be more likely to subscribe to traditional gender roles, which might include the tendency to support the use of violence to maintain control. The results from each model are presented in Table 20.

As expected based on results from all previous analyses, Model one did not reach significance at the .05 level, indicating that there was no association between assimilation level and attitudes toward violence regardless of violence type for this sample of Latino males. This finding will be discussed in more detail later, as it is in complete conflict with earlier predictions that were based on prior research. As shown in Table 20, Model two also failed to reach significance at the .05 level, indicating that, by and large, segmented assimilation variables are not significantly associated with approval of male-on-female violence specifically.

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Table 20

OLS Regression Results for Individual and Full Models, Male-on-Female Violence

Independent	1		2		3	
Variable	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
ALEVEL	-.088	.449			.081	.106
Assimilation type (theoretical)						
RACE			-.061	.193	.018	.212
SOCAP			.048	.028	.059	.032
SOCCLASS						
Absolute			.022	.164	-.067	.193
Relative			-.072	.142	-.047	.158
STRAIN			.015	.008	.015	.009
RESIDENCE			-.119	.179	-.127	.195
PERCEPTMT			-.191	.110	-.145	.127
PERCEPDIS			-.010	.111	.005	.128
EMPSTAT			.196	.177	.034	.206
Socio-demographic/Cultural						
AGE					.011	.049
NATIVITY					.298	.251
MACHO						
Masculinity					.124	.102
Male Superiority					.272*	.122
ALCOHOL					-.223	.214
ALCONSUMP					.074	.079
DRINKVIOLENT					.001	.097

R-square = .008	R-square = .089	R-square = .186*
F = 1.548 (*df* = 1, 187)	F = 1.740 (*df* = 9, 160)	F = 1.805 (*df* = 17, 134)
SE = 1.097	SE = 1.120	SE = 1.124
(n = 189)	(n = 170)	(n = 152)

NOTE: *Significant at the .05 level
       **Significant at the .01 level

The final model reached statistical significance at the .05 level. While social capital approached significance (p = .063), only one of the independent variables maintained a significant slope estimate. Particularly, the slope for male superiority was .272 and the *p*-value, .028. As expected, the variables were positively associated; indicating that agreement with male superiority will result in greater approval of the use

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of violence to achieve male dominance. The relationship between male superiority and attitudes toward violence has remained relatively stable across the models, a finding that supports research predictions. The implications of this development are discussed further in the final chapter.

Summary

In general, the results from the current study suggest that only a few of the independent variables were found to be significantly related to attitudes toward violence. These variables include social capital, machismo (male superiority), and perceptions of treatment by U.S. non-Latinos. Most surprisingly, assimilation level was not found to be significantly related to attitudes toward violence, even after accounting for violence type. While there was minimal support for the segmented assimilation perspective in that social capital and perceptions of mistreatment were found to be significant predictive factors of attitudes toward violence, acculturation stress was not found to be statistically significant when regressed against pro-violence. Furthermore, Latinos scoring higher on the social capital scale were found to hold more pro-violent attitudes than Latinos with lower social capital scores. These particular findings are in direct conflict with earlier predictions that were supported by segmented assimilation theory and countless other studies pertaining to assimilation in the U.S. Consequently, the associations, or lack thereof, may be due to a number of factors which will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

The other significant variables were all in the hypothesized directions. Male superiority was found to be positively associated with approval of violence. Furthermore, perception of treatment by U.S. non-Latinos was found to be negatively associated with pro-violent attitudes. These findings suggests that Latino males who are hyper-masculine

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and who perceive they are generally mistreated by non-Latinos in the U.S. are more likely to support the use of violence in various circumstances.

Another interesting finding is that, even after dividing the dependent variable into three specific types of violence to assess the effects of assimilation factors and socio-demographic and cultural characteristics, the results remained consistent across all three models. Furthermore, as in the previous analyses, the variable producing the most significant effect on attitudes is related to cultural characteristics. These findings lend support to the idea that relatively static characteristics and circumstances will play a significant role in the development of attitudes supporting the use of violence.

A discussion of the findings from Chapter five are presented in Chapter six. Particularly, a summary of the findings, theoretical and methodological implications, and strengths and limitations of the current study are discussed. In addition, directions for future research are also presented.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In recent years, an emerging body of literature has focused on the concept of acculturation to examine cultural influences on involvement in crime and delinquency among Latino immigrants and their descendants. The general expectation has been that less acculturated Latinos would be exposed to more acculturation stress as a result of language barriers and other obstacles to integration. In short, it has often been predicted that first-generation Latinos would be overwhelmingly represented as perpetrators of crime and delinquency (Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Sampson, et al., 2005). However, not unlike studies conducted on their much earlier European predecessors, the research on violence perpetrated by the first- generation Latinos has indicated little involvement in crime and delinquency in comparison to American-born Latino groups. In fact, findings have suggested that *more* assimilated/acculturated Latinos actually experience higher amounts of acculturation stress (Altschul, Oyserman, & Bybee, 2008; Amaro, Whitaker, Coffman, & Heeren, 1990; Bui, 2009; Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Caetano Vaeth, & Harris, 2007; Hirschman, 2001; Fridrich & Flannery, 1995; Klevens, 2007; Lown & Vega, 2001; Mogro-Wilson, 2008; Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005; Portes, Parker, and Cobas, 1980; Samaniego & Gonzales, 1999; Sorenson & Telles, 1991; Vega, Alderete, Kolody, & Aguilar-Gaxiola, 2000).

In this context, research has supported a positive relationship between acculturation stress and maladaptive assimilation behavioral outcomes. The source of this stress has often been associated with intergenerational conflicts between American-

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born Latinos and their foreign-born parents. These findings led to Portes and Zhou's (1993) development of segmented assimilation theory—the guiding theory in this study.

Despite these advancements in the literature related to assimilation and participation in violence among contemporary Latinos in the U.S., studies are lacking in regard to the exploration of an attitudinal foundation for violence; particularly, from a segmented assimilation perspective. The current study was designed to expand the criminological literature with regard to an in-depth understanding of how assimilation-related pressures, conflicts, and social relationships may determine, to a large extent, assimilation strategies, and ultimately, the development of violent/criminal/delinquent ideals—in this case, attitudes which condone the use of violence. More specifically, predictors of pro-violent attitudes included assimilation level and a number of acculturation-related, cultural, and sociodemographic indicators derived from recent assimilation research.

This chapter is organized around three primary issues that emerged from the instant research. The first is related to the absence of an assimilation-violence relationship, and some of the possible explanations for this result. The second is related to interesting findings in the context of the guiding theory. The third and final issue is focused on the implications regarding male superiority and perceptions of mistreatment, which were the variables having the most significant influence on pro-violent attitudes in the current study. Limitations of the study are incorporated throughout the discussion, as well as suggestions for future research. Following a thorough discussion of the issues and limitations, concluding thoughts are presented.

Assimilation Level-Violence Relationship

As previously stated, a number of studies focused on assimilation level and maladaptive outcomes have shown that Latinos who are highly assimilated (Americanized) are more likely to be involved in delinquent behaviors (Altschul, Oyserman, & Bybee, 2008; Amaro, Whitaker, Coffman, & Heeren, 1990; Bui, 2009; Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Caetano Vaeth, & Harris, 2007; Hirschman, 2001; Fridrich & Flannery, 1995; Klevens, 2007; Lown & Vega, 2001; Mogro-Wilson, 2008; Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005; Portes, Parker, and Cobas, 1980; Samaniego & Gonzales, 1999; Sorenson & Telles, 1991; Vega, Alderete, Kolody, & Aguilar-Gaxiola, 2000). In consideration of these findings, the primary expectation for the instant study was that attitudes toward violence would also vary depending on assimilation level. Particularly, it was expected that there would be a significant positive relationship between assimilation level and pro-violent attitudes. In fact, this expectation dictated the remaining research questions, especially since the presumption was that the impact of assimilation level would be reduced by a number of theoretical and sociodemographic characteristics.

Contrary to expectations, an assimilation-violence relationship did not exist among this sample of respondents. There are two possible explanations for this finding. The first explanation is related to the primary limitation of this study, which was the lack of diversity within the sample obtained for analysis. A sample of second and successive generation Latino males was chosen because past research has shown that this group experiences the most acculturation stress, and therefore, is at a high risk for involvement in violence (Altschul, Oyserman, & Bybee, 2008; Bankston & Zhou, 1997; Greenman &

Yu Xie, 2007; Hirschman, 2001; Martinez, Lee, & Nielsen, 2004; Nagasawa & Qian, 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997). As a novel approach to data collection, the goal was to recruit a diverse pool of participants through the use of social networking sites, including *MySpace Latino*, *Facebook*, and *Quepasa*. Although this researcher was optimistic that such a unique approach to recruitment would result in a sample of young Latino males who were diverse on a number of factors including education, ethnicity, race, social class, generational status, geographic location, and a host of other sociodemographic factors, this approach was not entirely successful. In fact, it resulted in a number of its own limitations that deserve attention.

Although social networking sites have become a substantially popular form of communication in recent years, only a limited number of studies have used them as a method of recruiting research participants (See, e.g., Tan, 2010). More frequently user profiles on sites such as *Facebook* and *MySpace* have been utilized to investigate user behaviors and attributes (Goodings, Locke, & Brown, 2007), and to examine user trends for the purposes of marketing and advertising (*See* Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield**,** 2008 and Thelwall, 2007, for a review of the literature). Some concerns regarding recruitment via social networking sites have included (a) low response rates among users; (b) samples limited to individuals having internet access (c) samples limited to individuals who frequently access their online accounts; (d) samples limited to individuals who access social networking sites from school (thereby, precluding educational and socioeconomic diversity); and, (e) data collected subjected to inaccuracies regarding a tendency for social networking users to misrepresent certain personal characteristics, such as age and location (Tan, 2010). While all of these concerns

were considered when designing the current study, the most salient issue that emerged early in the data collection stage was the low response rate among social networking users. In fact, after a month of active recruitment efforts on three separate social networking sites (*MySpace*, *Quepasa*, and *Facebook*), only approximately 35 completed surveys had been obtained for analysis. Moreover, moderators from two of the three social networking sites removed the research profiles.

In spite of the restrictions that were presented, recruitment through social networking sites had advantages in terms of the capacity to reach a geographically diverse population, particularly since access to this population has historically remained limited. For this reason, recruitment efforts provided a unique opportunity to obtain information from this otherwise hidden group of individuals. While the majority of participants in the current study were later recruited through colleges, the use of social networking sites yielded responses from a range, albeit small, of educationally diverse Latino males residing in various geographic locations throughout the U.S., which was the primary intention of this researcher. Thus, it was presumed that the social networking data would add diversity to the findings obtained otherwise from Latino college students only. Notwithstanding any benefits derived from this approach to recruitment, the findings obtained from both data sources (colleges and social networking sites) have a limited generalizability to the population of interest (second and successive-generation Latino males).

When efforts to recruit online and in the community were unsuccessful (minimal number of respondents), community and state colleges with high Latino enrollments were targeted in order to obtain the necessary number of respondents to conduct analyses. As

a result, there was an oversampling of college students from two specific locations in the U.S. (Florida and New Mexico), which precludes generalizability to Latino males who are diverse on a number of characteristics that may influence assimilation outcomes (e.g., education, geographic location, social class, and exposure to acculturation stress). Furthermore, as previously discussed, college students typically show little variation when compared to non-college students with respect to their responses on scale items utilized in social science research (Peterson, 2001). This point should be emphasized here, particularly since there was minimal variation found among respondents on a number of variables in the instant research.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the overall sample was highly assimilated (Anglo-orientated) and exhibited low acculturative stress. Further, the majority of respondents were employed, and scored high on social class and social capital through interactions with other Latinos (peers and family members). Hence, it is possible to argue that more support for the assimilation level-violence relationship would have been found among a more diversified pool of respondents. In other words, the sample may not have included subjects who are more likely to experience downward assimilation as proposed by Portes and Zhou's (1993) theory. Thus, such minimal variation in terms of key variables may explain the lack of support for the theoretical expectations.

Aside from issues with recruitment through social networking sites, it has been argued that conducting online survey research (and survey research more generally) with Latinos may be problematic because of the impersonal nature of this approach (López, 2008). In fact, a brief review of the relevant literature on cultural characteristics of the Latino population at large revealed a number of complex subcultures of peoples, the

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majority of whom share a desire for personal and meaningful social interactions based on trust and relatability. While steps were taken to personalize interactions with gate-keepers and potential respondents directly (e.g., by attending Latino-based community events and sending personalized introductions and invitations to participate via social networking bulletins), these strategies did not appear to increase participation. Further, although this researcher attempted to create an online profile and questionnaire that were minimally intrusive and respectful to participants, a substantial number of respondents who began the survey did not complete it (n = 333 vs. n = 208).

It is also possible that the lack of participation was related to survey construction. For example, there were some items (particularly those related to machismo and exposure to alcohol-related violence) that may have required further clarification and exploration. To illustrate this point, it should be noted that feedback obtained from respondents (via messages exchanged in *MySpace* and *Facebook* and in the commentary section at the end of the survey) indicated concern for some of the survey items. Particularly, respondents argued that some of the questions related to alcohol consumption and machismo were based on stereotypical presumptions about Latino culture; therefore, respondents felt as though the line of questioning was insulting, and were subsequently reluctant to continue. Given the subject matter under examination, it is quite possible that an online survey may not be the ideal method for collecting data with this population.

Second, while assimilation level has been found to influence *behavioral* outcomes, it may be that it is not predictive of *attitudes*. In fact, the bulk of studies that have found positive relationships between acculturation/assimilation and maladaptive outcomes among Latinos have typically focused on direct involvement in delinquency

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such as gang membership (Lopez & Brummett, 2003; Vigil, 2005), substance abuse, property offenses, and engagement in various types of crimes such as arson, robbery, and assault (Bui, 2009; Bui & Thongniramol, 2005; Buriel, Calzada, & Vasquez, 1982; Fridrich & Flannery, 1995; Sampson, Morenoff, & Raudenbush, 2005). In the context of attitudes, the assimilation-violence relationship has not been as clearly determined— particularly, it appears to be an understudied area, and results from existing studies have produced contradictory findings. For example, the body of research on the relationship between acculturation level and endorsement of violence against women is equally divided; whereas about half of the studies have found a positive relationship between acculturation and approval of violence against women, and the other half have indicated the opposite (e.g., *See* Bhannot & Senn, 2007; Ulloa, Jaycox, Marshall, & Collins, 2004).

Further, a limited number of studies have indicated differences in Latino attitudes toward immigration and other public policies; differences that are associated with level of acculturation in the U.S. However, similar to the research cited above, results have been mixed. For example, higher levels of acculturation have been found to be associated with more politically conservative views such an increased support for immigration restrictions and decreased government spending on policies that support minorities in general (e.g., affirmative action policies, "No Child Left Behind") (Branton, 2007). In contrast, acculturated Latinos have also been found to have more critical perceptions of U.S. society in comparison to their less acculturated counterparts, especially with respect to environmental issues and discrimination against their own ethnic group (Gamba, Schultz, & Unipan, 2000; Portes, Parker, & Cobas, 1980). While these results suggest that there may be differences in perceptions and attitudes depending on acculturation

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levels, the extent to which assimilation level is predictive of pro-violent attitudes remains inconclusive.

Aside from these explanations related to the findings, there is also an issue with the body of literature on acculturation in general that deserves attention. Particularly, it is important to recognize that a variety of instruments have been used to measure acculturation level, making it difficult to compare findings across studies. For example, using cultural preparedness and socioeconomic standing as measures of acculturation among Cuban and Mexican immigrants, Portes, Parker, and Cobas (1980) found that acculturation was associated with negative perceptions of U.S. society and discrimination. Particularly, subjects who were more assimilated tended to hold critical views toward the U.S. in general, and specifically, the manner in which they were received by mainstream Americans. In another study of U.S. Hispanics, Caetano (1987) found that acculturated respondents (a composite measure including language used, media preference, and other aspects of daily life) had more liberal attitudes toward drinking alcohol when compared with their less-acculturated counterparts, although this varied by gender (Caetano, 1987).

Conversely, using the ARSMA-II as their measure of acculturation, the same measure used in the instant study, Castillo, Conoley, and Brossart (2004) found no relationship between acculturation and perceptions of psychological distress (related to ethnic identity) among a sample of 247 Mexican American college students. Further, Ulloa, Jaycox, Marshall, and Collins (2004) examined the extent to which belief in gender stereotypes, recent dating experiences, gender, and acculturation (measured as linguistic proficiency) predicted attitudes toward dating violence. They found that the

two strongest predictor variables were gender stereotypes and gender. Similarly, in their examination of attitudes toward violence against women among men of South Asian ancestry, Bhanot and Senn (2007) found a relationship between acculturation (measured with a 32-item attitude-based acculturation scale specifically designed for use with South Asians) and approval of violence against women. However, this relationship was fully mediated by traditional beliefs about family structure and sex-roles. Given the inconsistencies with regard to the role of acculturation in maladaptive outcomes, there is clearly a need for more uniform methods to measure acculturation that are appropriate for use with Latino populations.

This section has provided several explanations for the lack of an assimilation-violence relationship in the present study. While these explanations do not make the findings irrelevant, there are specific characteristics of the sample obtained that have important implications for the theoretical perspective guiding this research. These implications are discussed in the following section.

Assimilation Type-Violence Relationship: Segmented Assimilation Theory

In contrast to the classical assimilation perspective which predicts a straight-line path to Americanization and upward mobility, the segmented perspective delineates three distinct modes of adaptation by immigrant youth in the U.S.: (1) the classical one-path theory of acculturation and integration into the mainstream, (2) downward assimilation into the underclass, and (3) biculturalism or the preservation of cultural traditions and the maintenance of close ethnic ties (Portes and Zhou, 1993). According to Portes and Zhou (1993), the assimilation trajectory is largely dependent on opportunity structure and contacts with other ethnic groups in U.S. In particular, factors such as economic and

educational opportunities, residential location, extent of Americanization, acculturation stress, perceptions of discrimination based on race/ethnicity, and access to social capital largely determine the selected mode of adaptation. Given that downward assimilation is the path most closely associated with maladaptive outcomes, such as involvement in crime and delinquency, this researcher was expecting to find significant associations between several key predictors (e.g., high acculturation stress, race, urbanization) and pro-violent attitudes.

Contrary to expectations, several key indicators of downward assimilation were assessed and found *not* to be statistically significant insofar as their relationship to attitudes toward violence. In summary, only one of the ten theoretical predictors of Latino attitudes toward violence was significant in the theoretical model (*See* Table 16). Particularly, regression results showed a significant positive effect of social capital. However, while the theory predicts that the absence of social capital may lead to more maladaptive outcomes, the construct was found to be positively related to pro-violent attitudes among this sample of Latino males. In other words, the model indicated that Latino males who maintained strong ethnic ties through continued relations with other Latino peers or family members were more likely to condone the use of violence, a finding wholly inconsistent with the extant research.

One explanation could be that social capital was not well examined by the three item scale utilized here.   According to Portes and Zhou (1993), access to moral and material resources (human and social capital) through a well-established coethnic community is an essential component for circumventing negative assimilation outcomes. While segmented assimilation theory focuses on community cohesiveness, employment

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opportunities, and networking that occurs in distinct ethnic niches, it does not outline a clear method of measuring social (or human) capital. Consequently, the social capital scale developed for this study consisted of original items, and included items pertaining to religion, extent of coethnic community representation, and the extent of inter-ethnic relationships with peers and family members. As discussed in the preceding chapter, the original scale had a Cronbach alpha below .60, and was therefore, modified. It is important to note that the remaining items were designed to measure only the frequency of associations with other Latinos. Given that many acculturation difficulties among Latino youth seem to originate from a discrepancy in acculturative status between youth and their parents and peers, it is important to understand how the quality of these interactions can disrupt relations and influence attitudes toward violence. For example, it may be that frequent interactions with other members of the immigrant subgroup may provide more exposure to those who are experiencing substantial levels of acculturation stress and discrimination. Thus, future studies should consider measuring social capital with a series of items related to both the frequency and quality of inter-ethnic relationships with peers and parents.

There were other limitations in this study that may have precluded the ability to more accurately examine the theoretical constructs related to downward assimilation. While the survey was designed to provide a comprehensive measurement of the theoretical constructs, key cultural and social characteristics, and the dependent variable, there may have been issues associated with the wording of two of the questions.

For example, according to the segmented assimilation perspective, race is one of the key factors influencing assimilation outcomes. Particularly, the theory predicts that,

in conjunction with residential location and access to social capital, race may determine the manner of reception one receives by larger society. In short, those having darker skin tones are more likely to experience discrimination, and therefore, have the potential to be subjected to downward assimilation (Portes & Zhou, 1993). Out of concern for sensitivity of the survey content, the question pertaining to this construct was designed asking respondents to indicate their race in a general context rather than specifically asking them to indicate skin color. Categories for this variable were selected based on the 2010 U.S. Census question pertaining to race.

As discussed previously, in addition to selecting all that apply from a number of race categories, respondents were given the option to write in a response. While allowing for the flexibility of self-identification, this presented a problem with construct validity, in that the question did not truly measure the theoretical construct as intended (skin color). Although the large majority of subjects identified as "non-white", the variable, as operationalized, prevented reliable interpretation of the results. Particularly, regardless of the categories selected ("non-white" and/or "other"), a sizeable proportion of participants also typed in responses such as "Hispanic", "Mestizo", "human", "Latino", "Mixed Latino", and "Mexican". For this reason, it is suggested that alternative questions be posed in future studies. For example, in their examination of the skin color-hypertension relationship among blacks, Klonoff and Landrine (2000) asked subjects to rate their skin color on a five-point scale (1 = very light skinned, 2 = light skinned, 3 = medium skinned, 4 = dark skinned, 5 = very dark skinned).

The second issue involving the wording of survey items pertains to the measurement of educational attainment. Particularly, the variable representing education

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was phrased as an open-ended question, in that it asked respondents to indicate the number of years of schooling completed. This was done in order to obtain a ratio level variable for analytic purposes. However, responses lacked consistency, indicating respondents' confusion over the question as worded. For example, some respondents indicated they had completed "four years" which could have been interpreted as four years total or four years beyond high school. Of the 123 respondents who answered the educational attainment question, approximately 35 surveys were problematic. Given the difficulty in coding the responses, the variable was ultimately excluded from the analysis. Since educational attainment has been found to be a significant source of human capital, and therefore, an important protective factor against negative assimilation outcomes, this presents a substantial limitation in the instant study. It is suggested that future research utilize an ratio level education variable with labels that are clearly indicative of various levels of educational completion (e.g., "Grade school 1, 2, 3, 4"; "Middle school 5, 6"; "Junior high 7, 8"; "High school 9, 10, 11, 12").

Perhaps most importantly, although the majority of respondents self-identified as non-white, were highly Americanized, and resided in urban areas, the majority were also employed, had access to social capital (through the maintenance of inter-ethnic relationships), scored high on social class (both absolute and relative), and scored low on acculturation stress. These findings suggest that, despite residence in urban areas and exposure to barriers such as discrimination and intergenerational conflicts, respondents appeared to pursue a strategy of bicultural adaptation, which has been found to be the healthiest outcome according to contemporary segmented assimilation perspectives (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Romero & Roberts, 2003). This particular assimilation trajectory

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or mode of adaptation has also been referred to in the literature as "selective acculturation" (Altschul, et al., 2008; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

The main idea is that, for some immigrants who perceive a threat of exposure to poor economic and social conditions (e.g., joblessness, drugs, discrimination, engagement in criminal activities), a selective adaptation strategy may be taken to avoid vulnerability to downward assimilation. This is particularly the case for individuals living in (or in close proximity to) an inner-city, which includes a majority of respondents in the instant study. Through this strategy of selective acculturation, Latino youth may develop bicultural identities, which revolve around a selective balance of American aspirations such as educational and career advancement, and traditional culture through maintenance of a strong ethnic identity and access to substantial social capital in a positive community context (Altschul, et al, 2008). In short, the lack of a relationship between pro-violent attitudes and indicators of downward assimilation may be because the majority of Latino males in this study were able to find various ways to successfully adapt to or minimize the negative effects of Americanization (e.g., through educational advancement).

There is certainly no denying that factors such as residential location, discrimination, treatment, and accessibility to economic and social advancement may substantially dictate the course of the assimilation experience. From this perspective, Latinos and Blacks, though not identical, do share a similar experience. However, contemporary Latinos are unique in that, in addition to the above mentioned factors, they subscribe to a complex mix of cultural characteristics. Furthermore, their experiences with discrimination are very different—even as compared to those encountered by their

parents and grandparents. Through the process of selective acculturation, there may be

certain aspects of their respective cultures, both positive and negative, that are influential

in the development of future behaviors and attitudes, regardless of successful integration

into the mainstream. According to Portes and Zhou (1993), successful outcomes are

largely dependent upon specific vulnerabilities, access to resources, and how Latino

youth perceive they are being treated by larger society. For this reason, a select number

of cultural characteristics were examined in the present analysis. Important implications

from the full model are discussed below.

The Influence of Sociodemographic & Cultural Variables

In general, the examination of cultural and sociodemographic factors and how

they influence Latino attitudes toward violence provided for a number of interesting

findings. Most importantly, the addition of the seven mediating variables to Model 3

(*See* Table 17) increased the variance explained by more than twenty percent (.032 vs.

.296) from the previous (theoretical) model (*See* Table 16). This finding revealed the

strong influence that relatively stable characteristics may have on attitudes, regardless of

assimilation factors.

Indicators of machismo within the current study included masculinity and male

superiority. The influence of one's heightened sense of masculinity on acceptance of

violence was not found to be statistically significant. However, male superiority was

found to be one of the strongest predictors of pro-violent attitudes. This finding suggests

that respondents who scored high on male dominance were more likely to support the use

of violence even when controlling for the influence of assimilation level and the

theoretical and sociodemographic constructs. This finding is consistent with previous

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research that indicates that some aspects of Latino culture, particularly machismo or heightened perceptions of masculinity and male dominance, are related to an increased acceptance of and participation in violence overall (Sanderson, Coker, Roberts, Tortolero, & Reininger, 2004; Yan, Howard, Beck, Shattuck, & Hallmark-Kerr, 2009).

While this finding was not surprising, it was interesting given the particular sample of Latino males obtained for these analyses. Again, the sample contained a highly assimilated/Americanized group of Latino males who were primarily college students scoring high on key variables such as social class and social capital. As previously discussed, a review of the literature revealed mixed findings regarding the acculturation-violence relationship. Some studies focused on Latino-Americans have indicated that higher levels of acculturation (Americanization) are associated with increased levels of intimate partner violence as well as attitudes which support the use of violence against women. In this context, it has been suggested that, in comparison to traditional Latino cultures, mainstream American culture condones attitudes that are more favorable toward violence, thereby effecting belief systems related to the family and appropriate gender roles (Lown & Vega, 2001; Sorenson & Telles, 1991). This explanation has been supported by studies related to the role of media in perpetuating violence among American youth—particularly, college students (See, e.g., Fanti, Vanman, Henrich, & Avraamides, 2009; Funk, Baldacci, Pasold, & Baumgardner, 2004).

Alternatively, another body of literature has indicated the opposite; that Latino males who are more acculturated (assimilated or bicultural) are generally less likely to subscribe to gender stereotypes which endorse male superiority or dominance over women (Cuéllar, Arnold, & Gonzalez, 1995; Ulloa, Jaycox, Marshall, and Collins, 2004).

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Particularly, research has indicated that first-generation Latino immigrants are more likely to perpetrate and approve of violence against an intimate partner compared to their second and successive generation counterparts. Such findings have been explained by the influence of patriarchal values regarding more traditional gender roles on violence specifically targeted against women (Finn, 1986; Murnen, Wright, & Kaluzny, 2002).

In line with this body of research, one explanation for the current study is that the respondents' high Anglo-orientation and accessibility to social and human capital could be reducing their levels of acculturation stress, while at the same time allowing them to maintain select traditional values related to gender roles. In addition, due to a host of other factors (e.g., intergenerational conflicts with parents, exposure to discrimination by the mainstream), they may rely more heavily on the traditional values of less acculturated Latino family and friends when determining views toward the use of violence. Thus, this suggests that one can selectively maintain certain aspects of traditional culture yet be highly assimilated to the mainstream in general. What is less clear, however, is the extent to which these cultural influences maintain themselves in spite of successful integration.

A general limitation of this research in terms of its ability to interpret the results in this context is the lack of exploration into the extent of parental influence and the influence of patriarchy. However, given the contradiction between the sample characteristics (Anglo-oriented, highly acculturated college students) and strength of male superiority as a predictive factor of pro-violent attitudes, the findings lend further support to a strategy of selective assimilation, and the possibility that there may be some other acculturative factor that is influencing the extent to which otherwise successful Latino males are clinging to values or beliefs that condone the use of violence.

Once the sociodemographic and cultural variables were added to Model 3 (Table 17), the only theory-based variable found to be related to attitudes toward violence was perception of overall mistreatment by mainstream (non-Latino) Americans. Particularly, findings indicated that respondents who were dissatisfied with the way Latinos are treated by non-Latinos in the U.S. were more likely to approve of the use of violence. This finding added a new perspective on the ability of bicultural Latinos to successfully overcome hostility by the white majority in the United States. In fact, it could be argued that the beneficial effects of a selective or bicultural adaptation strategy may not be strong enough to counter the negative effects of marginalization. Based on the strength of male superiority in the model, it is possible to argue that bicultural Latino youth who perceive a threat to their ethnic identities may revert to more traditional beliefs (such as male dominance) as source of protection from an inhospitable reception by mainstream society. It is possible, then, that complete Americanization may represent a form of disloyalty to one's ethnic group, which may only exacerbate maladaptive assimilation outcomes, such as the development of pro-violent attitudes.

Conclusion

Again, it should be emphasized that Latinos are the largest ethnic minority group in the United States, and recent population estimates project their numbers to triple by the year 2050 (U.S. Census, 2004). Despite the high prevalence of poverty, discrimination, language barriers, and a host of other obstacles to economic and social advancement, we know relatively little about the extent to which unique acculturation-related stressors experienced by this population influence their attitudes or perceptions. The intent of this

study was to provide a closer examination of the influence of acculturation and other social and cultural characteristics on pro-violent attitudes. In addition, this study specifically examined the influence from a segmented assimilation perspective; a task that had not yet been undertaken.

The findings of this research demonstrated that factors which influence Latino attitudes toward violence may be unique from predictor variables that, in the past, have been used to explain maladaptive assimilation outcomes. The assimilation experience of contemporary Latinos in the United States, while similar to previous generations, is unique and seemingly more complex. Researchers must give consideration to the widespread negative sentiments toward undocumented immigrants in the U.S., and how an inhospitable manner of reception can ultimately affect acculturation strategies. While the hypotheses developed for this study were not entirely supported, the results point to the critical need to conduct further research related to attitudes that may support the use of violence among Latinos from all generational groups.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

MySpace Latino Profile

Who I'd like to meet:

ASSIMILATION STUDY
CALL FOR LATINO MALE VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 25 AND ARE CURRENTLY LIVING IN THE U.S.

Hello and thank you for visiting my profile! I am asking for your participation in a survey, provided in both English and Spanish, which I am conducting with the Department of Criminology at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. I am asking Latino males between the ages of 18 and 25 to reflect on their culture and experiences as Latinos living in the United States. I am especially interested in how mainstream American culture influences approval of different types of violence. Your responses to this survey are very important and will help in advancing teaching and research in criminal justice and criminology studies. This is a lengthy survey and may take you about 35 minutes or more to complete. I know your time is valuable, and I appreciate you taking the time to help advance my understanding of your experiences in the U.S. Please click on the link below to go to the survey website (or copy and paste the survey link into your Internet browser) to begin the survey.

Survey Link:

Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary and all of ALL OF YOUR RESPONSES WILL BE KEPT ANONYMOUS. No personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses in any reports of this data. Should you have any further questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at m.bratina@iup.edu or 724-357-7741.

I appreciate your time and consideration in completing the survey. Thank you for participating in this study! It is only through the help of individuals like you that we can provide information to help guide the direction of teaching, research, and policy.

Many thanks,

Michele P. Bratina
Temporary Faculty and PhD Candidate
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
**ASIMILACIÓN DE
ESTUDIO CONVOCATORIA DE varones latinos voluntarios entre las edades de 18 y 25 años y que estén viviendo ACTUALMENTE EN LOS EE.UU. ¡Hola y gracias por visitar mi perfil! Le estoy pidiendo su participación en una encuesta, proveída en Inglés y Español, que estoy llevando a cabo con el Departamento de Criminología de la Universidad de Indiana de Pennsylvania. Se necesitan hombres latinos entre las edades de 18 y 25 para reflexionar sobre su cultura y sus experiencias como latinos viviendo en los Estados Unidos. Estoy especialmente interesada en estudiar cómo la aculturación y situaciones que crean estrés en la cultura americana influyen en la aprobación de las diferentes formas de agresión física a otras personas, el portar armas y agresión en contra de las mujeres. Por ejemplo, ¿aprueban más los latinos varones americanizados las peleas y el portar armas que los latinos varones que se identifican con su cultura de su país de origen? Sus respuestas son muy importantes y ayudarán en la promoción de la enseñanza y la investigación de la justicia penal y los estudios de criminología. Este es un estudio largo y puede llevarle 35 minutos o más en completarse. Sé que su tiempo es valioso, y le agradezco tomarse su tiempo para ayudar mi comprensión de sus experiencias en los

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the direction of teaching, research, and policy.

Many thanks,

Michele P. Bratina
Temporary Faculty and PhD Candidate
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
**ASIMILACIÓN DE
ESTUDIO CONVOCATORIA DE varones latinos voluntarios entre las edades de 18 y 25 años y que estén viviendo ACTUALMENTE EN LOS EE.UU. ¡Hola y gracias por visitar mi perfil! Le estoy pidiendo su participación en una encuesta, proveída en Inglés y Español, que estoy llevando a cabo con el Departamento de Criminología de la Universidad de Indiana de Pennsylvania. Se necesitan hombres latinos entre las edades de 18 y 25 para reflexionar sobre su cultura y sus experiencias como latinos viviendo en los Estados Unidos. Estoy especialmente interesada en estudiar cómo la aculturación y situaciones que crean estrés en la cultura americana influyen en la aprobación de las diferentes formas de agresión física a otras personas, el portar armas y agresión en contra de las mujeres. Por ejemplo, ¿aprueban más los latinos varones americanizados las peleas y el portar armas que los latinos varones que se identifican con su cultura de su país de origen? Sus respuestas son muy importantes y ayudarán en la promoción de la enseñanza y la investigación de la justicia penal y los estudios de criminología. Este es un estudio largo y puede llevarle 35 minutos o más en completarse. Sé que su tiempo es valioso, y le agradezco tomarse su tiempo para ayudar mi comprensión de sus experiencias en los EE.UU. Por favor haga clic en el enlace de abajo para ir a la página de la encuesta en el internet (o copie y pegue el enlace de la encuesta en el navegador de Internet) para comenzar la encuesta. Enlace de la encuesta: Su participación en esta encuesta es totalmente voluntaria y todas sus respuestas en los informes de estos datos permanecerán anónimas sin ninguna identificación personal. Si usted tiene alguna duda o comentario, por favor no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo a la siguiente dirección electrónica: m.bratina @ iup.edu o al siguiente número de teléfono: 724-357-7741. Le agradezco su tiempo y consideración en la realización de la encuesta. ¡Gracias por participar en este estudio! Es sólo a través de la ayuda de personas como usted que nos puede proporcionar información para ayudar a orientar la dirección de la enseñanza, la investigación y la política. Muchas gracias, Michele P. Bratina Profesora temporal y estudiante candidata para doctorado Universidad de Indiana de Pennsylvania

Textbox Code Maker Custom Textbox

Friend Space (Top 1)

Michele P. Bratina has 1 friends.   View: All   Online   New

Tom

203

Appendix B

Survey Instrument (English Version)

A Survey of Latino Culture, Level of Americanization, and Beliefs Regarding the Use of Violence
Welcome!

Who is conducting this study?

This study is being conducted by Michele Bratina, a doctoral student in the criminology department at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), for the purpose of a PhD dissertation.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to understand some of the problems experienced by Latino males living in the United States and how these problems may influence approval of violence. For example, some of the questions ask if you have experienced stress or discrimination while trying to fit in; other questions ask if you feel it is okay to use violence against someone in a certain situation. This study is also interested how experiences with discrimination or stress may be different depending on whether someone was born inside or outside of the United States.

Persons eligible to participate:

Participants must be male Latinos between the ages of 18 and 25, and currently living in the U.S. *Latino* refers to respondents (of any race) having ancestral origins in Mexico, Cuba, South or Central America, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, or other Spanish/Latin American countries.

What will be done?

You will complete an online questionnaire with a total of 97 questions. The questions seek to gather information about you, your culture, your beliefs, the types of stressors you have encountered, and the extent to which you approve of violence in different circumstances. Although the questions ask you to select a response from a number of options, you will be allowed the opportunity to provide details of your experiences at the end of the survey if you so choose. This survey may take anywhere from 30 to 45 minutes to complete.

Benefits of this Study:

There is no direct benefit for participating in this study. You will be contributing to knowledge about how Latinos living in the U.S. manage their ethnic identity and the experiences that Latino males have during the acculturation process. This is important to understanding how attitudes towards violence may differ depending on the assimilation experience. This is a unique opportunity to participate in an original study.

Risks or discomforts:

No risks or discomforts are anticipated from taking part in this study. If you feel uncomfortable with a question, you can skip that question or withdraw from the study altogether. If you decide to quit at any time before you have submitted this questionnaire your answers will not be included in this study.

Confidentiality:

Your responses will be kept completely anonymous. Your location and IP address will not be identified when you respond to the Internet questionnaire. I will have no way of knowing who completed any of the questionnaires.

Decision to quit at any time:

Your participation is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your participation from this study at any time prior to submitting the questionnaire. If you do not want to continue, you can simply stop completing the questionnaire by closing your browser. You may also choose to skip any questions that you do not wish to answer. Please note that once this questionnaire has been submitted the option to withdraw your responses will not be possible. To avoid any disappointment please only submit the questionnaire if you are certain that you wish your responses to be included in the study.

How the findings will be used:

The results of the study will be used for scholarly purposes only. The results from the study might be presented in educational settings and at professional/academic conferences and the results might be published in an academic journal in the field of criminal justice, criminology, and/or sociology.

Questions or Concerns:

If you have concerns or questions about this study, please contact either the student researcher or dissertation chair.

Student Researcher:

Michele P. Bratina
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Criminology Department
Wilson Hall, Room 111
Indiana, PA 15705
m.bratina@iup.edu

Dissertation Chair:

Jennifer J. Roberts, Ph.D.
Associate Professor/Doctoral Coordinator
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Criminology Department
Wilson Hall, Room 201
Indiana, PA 15701
jroberts@iup.edu

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

By beginning and submitting this questionnaire, you acknowledge that you are 18 years or older and that you have read the above information and agree to voluntarily participate in this research, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time before submission.

Thank you for taking the time to help me with my research!!

Of the following choices, please select the ONE that best describes your ancestry or ethnic origin.

⬤ Mexican, Mexican-American, or Chicano

- ⇒ ● Puerto Rican

- ⇒ ● Cuban

- ⇒ ● Central or South American

- ⇒ ● Dominican

- ⇒ ● Other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino-- *Please type your Country of Origin in the space provided* [   ]

What is your race? *Please mark all that apply*

- ⇒ ☐ *White*

- ⇒ ☐ *Black, African-American, or Negro*

- ⇒ ☐ *American Indian or Alaskan Native*

- ⇒ ☐ *Other race-- Please type your race in the space provided* [   ]

Where were you born?

- ⇒ ● *Inside the United States*

- ⇒ ● *Outside the United States*

In what country was your father born?

- ⇒ ● *United States*

- ⇒ ● *Outside of the United States (Please specify the country below)* [   ]

- ⇒ ● *Don't know*

In what country was your mother born?

- ⇒ ● *United States*

- ⇒ ● *Outside of the United States (Please specify the county below)* [   ]

- ⇒ ● *Don't know*

On how many occasions (if any) in the last <u>30 days</u> *have you invited Latino friends or acquaintances over to your residence?*

- ⇒ ● *Not at all*

- ⇒ ● *About one time*

- ⇒ ● *Two to three times*

- ⇒ ● *About once a week*

- ⇒ ● *More than once a week*

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On how many occasions (if any) in the last 30 days have you hung out with Latino friends or acquaintances in a public place?

- *Not at all*
- *About one time*
- *Two to three times*
- *About once a week*
- *More than once a week*

On how many occasions (if any) in the last 30 days have you visited with relatives?

- *Not at all*
- *About one time*
- *Two to three times*
- *About once a week*
- *More than once a week*

What type of area best describes your current residential location?

- *Urban/Central city*
- *Suburban*
- *Rural*

How would you categorize the extent to which Latinos are represented in the community where you reside? Small to non-existent ethnic communities are either small in numbers or composed primarily of labors and manual workers. Strong ethnic communities have sizable numbers of Latinos and a diversified pool of workers, including business owners and other professionals. A moderate ethnic community is one somewhere in the middle of the two types just explained.

- *Small to non-existent ethnic community*
- *Moderate ethnic community*
- *Strong ethnic community*

Overall, how satisfied are you with how you are treated by non-Latino Americans in the United States?

- *Very dissatisfied*
- *Somewhat dissatisfied*
- *Somewhat satisfied*

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●
Very satisfied

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement: "Persons of Latino or Hispanic origin are discriminated against by Anglo (non-Latino) Americans in the United States."

●
Strongly disagree

●
Somewhat disagree

●
Somewhat agree

●
Strongly agree

How often did you attend religious services in the past year?

●
Not at all

●
A few times

●
About one to two times a month

●
About once a week

●
More than once a week

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement: "My religion influences my lifestyle."

●
Strongly disagree

●
Somewhat disagree

●
Somewhat agree

●
Strongly agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement: "Men are supposed to show their masculinity or else they may be seen as feminine, wimpy, or homosexual."

●
Strongly disagree

●
Somewhat disagree

●
Somewhat agree

●
Strongly agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement: "Men are superior to women in many ways."

●
Strongly disagree

●
Somewhat disagree

●
Somewhat agree

·> ● *Strongly agree*

    Is it generally acceptable within your family to drink alcoholic beverages on a regular basis--not just on special occasions or holidays? Alcoholic beverages may include beer, wine, wine coolers, and liquor.

·> ● *Yes*

·> ● *No*

·> ● *Not sure*

    On how many occasions (if any) in the last <u>30 days</u> have you had more than just a few sips of alcohol to drink? Alcohol is defined as beer, wine, wine coolers, and liquor.

·> ● *Not at all*

·> ● *About one time*

·> ● *Two to three times*

·> ● *About once a week*

·> ● *More than once a week*

    In the past year, how often (if at all) have you witnessed a situation in which drinking among Latino men led to these men becoming violent?

·> ● *Not at all*

·> ● *About one time*

·> ● *Two to three times*

·> ● *About once a week*

·> ● *More than once a week*

Assimilation/Acculturation in the United States

Please mark a number between 1 and 5 next to each item that best applies.

Assimilation/Acculturation in the United States

Please mark a number between 1 and 5 next to each item that best applies.

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	Not at all	Very little or not very often	Moderately	Much or very often	Extremely often or almost always
I speak Spanish	●	●	●	●	●
I speak English	●	●	●	●	●
I enjoy speaking Spanish	●	●	●	●	●
I associate with Anglos	●	●	●	●	●
I associate with Latinos and/or Latino Americans	●	●	●	●	●
I enjoy listening to Spanish-language music	●	●	●	●	●
I enjoy listening to English-language music	●	●	●	●	●
I enjoy Spanish-language TV	●	●	●	●	●

	Not at all	Very little or not very often	Moderately	Much or very often	Extremely often or almost always
I enjoy English-language TV	●	●	●	●	●
I enjoy English-language movies	●	●	●	●	●
I enjoy Spanish-language movies	●	●	●	●	●
I enjoy reading (e.g., books) in Spanish	●	●	●	●	●
I enjoy reading (e.g., books) in English	●	●	●	●	●
I write (e.g., letters) in Spanish	●	●	●	●	●
I write (e.g., letters) in the English language	●	●	●	●	●
My thinking is done in the English language	●	●	●	●	●

	Not at all	Very little or not very often	Moderately	Much or very often	Extremely often or almost always
My thinking is done in the Spanish language	●	●	●	●	●
	●	●	●	●	●

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Assimilation/Acculturation in the United States

Please mark a number between 1 and 5 next to each item that best applies.

	Not at all	Very little or not very often	Moderately	Much or very often	Extremely often or almost always
My contact with Mexico, Cuba, or other country of origin has been					
My contact with the USA has been	●	●	●	●	●
My father identifies or identified himself as "Latino" (e.g., "Mexican")	●	●	●	●	●
My mother identifies or identified herself as "Latina" (e.g., "Mexican")	●	●	●	●	●
My friends, while I was growing up, were of Latino origin (e.g., Mexican, Puerto Rican, other)	●	●	●	●	●
My friends, while I was growing up, were of Anglo origin	●	●	●	●	●
My family cooks Latino (e.g., Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban) foods	●	●	●	●	●

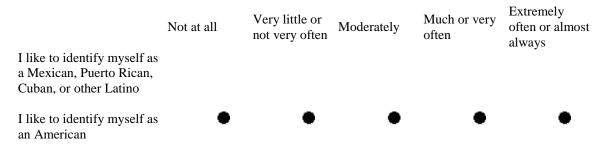|	Not at all	Very little or not very often	Moderately	Much or very often	Extremely often or almost always
My friends now are of Anglo origin	●	●	●	●	●
My friends now are of Latino origin	●	●	●	●	●
I like to identify myself as a Mexican-American, Cuban-American, or other Latino-American	●	●	●	●	●
I like to identify myself as an Anglo American	●	●	●	●	●
	●	●	●	●	●

Assimilation/Acculturation in the United States

Please mark a number between 1 and 5 next to each item that best applies.

	Not at all	Very little or not very often	Moderately	Much or very often	Extremely often or almost always
I like to identify myself as a Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or other Latino					
I like to identify myself as an American	●	●	●	●	●

Acculturation Stress

Please indicate how stressful the following experiences have been for you. If you have never had the experiences listed please mark "Does not apply".

Acculturation Stress

Please indicate how stressful the following experiences have been for you. If you have never had the experiences listed please mark "Does not apply".

	Not at all stressful	A little bit stressful	Quite a bit stressful	Very stressful	Does not apply
I have been treated badly because of my accent.	●	●	●	●	●
Because of family obligations I can't always do what I want.	●	●	●	●	●
I have worried about family members or friends having problems with immigration.	●	●	●	●	●
I have had problems at school because of my poor English.	●	●	●	●	●
I do not feel comfortable with people whose culture is different from mine.	●	●	●	●	●
I have felt pressure to learn Spanish	●	●	●	●	●

Acculturation Stress

Please indicate how stressful the following experiences have been for you. If you have never had the experiences listed please mark "Does not apply".

	Not at all stressful	A little bit stressful	Quite a bit stressful	Very stressful	Does not apply
I have felt that I need to speak Spanish better.	●	●	●	●	●

	Not at all stressful	A little bit stressful	Quite a bit stressful	Very stressful	Does not apply
I have argued with my girlfriend/significant other over being too traditional.	●	●	●	●	●
My friends think I'm acting "White".	●	●	●	●	●
My parents feel I do not respect older people the way I should.	●	●	●	●	●
I feel uncomfortable when others make jokes about or put down peole of my ethnic background.	●	●	●	●	●
I have argued with family members because I do not want to do some traditions.	●	●	●	●	●
I have had to translate/interpret for my parents.	●	●	●	●	●
I have felt lonely and isolated because my family does not stick together.	●	●	●	●	●

	Not at all stressful	A little bit stressful	Quite a bit stressful	Very stressful	Does not apply
I have felt that others do not accept me because of my ethnic group.	●	●	●	●	●
I have had to help my parents by explaining how to do things in the U.S.	●	●	●	●	●
I feel like I can't do what most American kinds do	●	●	●	●	●

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Acculturation Stress

Please indicate how stressful the following experiences have been for you. If you have never had the experiences listed please mark "Does not apply".

	Not at all stressful	A little bit stressful	Quite a bit stressful	Very stressful	Does not apply
because of my parents' culture.					
I feel like belonging to a gang is part of representing my ethnic group.	●	●	●	●	●
Sometimes I do not understand why people from different ethnic backgrounds act a certain way.	●	●	●	●	●
Sometimes I feel that it will be harder to succeed because of my ethnic background.	●	●	●	●	●

Attitudes Towards Violence

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I try to stay away from places where violence is likely.	●	●	●	●
It's okay to do whatever it takes to protect myself.	●	●	●	●
It's okay to use violene to get whatever you want.	●	●	●	●
People who use violence get respect.	●	●	●	●

Attitudes Towards Violence

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Carrying a gun or knife would help me feel safer.	●	●	●	●
If a person hits you, you should hit them back.	●	●	●	●

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
It's okay to beat up a person for badmouthing me or my family.	●	●	●	●
It's okay to carry a gun or a knife if you live in a rough neighborhood.	●	●	●	●
It's good to carry a gun with you at all times.	●	●	●	●
Parents should tell their children to use violence if necessary.	●	●	●	●
If someone tries to start a fight with you, you should walk away.	●	●	●	●
It's okay to use a weapon when fighting.	●	●	●	●

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I could see myself joining a gang.	●	●	●	●
I'm afraid of getting hurt by violence.	●	●	●	●
It's okay to hit a woman to get her to do what I want.	●	●	●	●
Most women like to be pushed around by men.	●	●	●	●
The male should NOT allow the female the same	●	●	●	●

Attitudes Towards Violence

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
amount of freedom he has.				
Violence between intimate partners can improve the relationship. *An intimate partner may include wife, girlfriend, ex-wife, ex-girlfriend, and common-law wife.*	●	●	●	●

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
There are times when violence between intimate partners is okay. *An intimate partner may include wife, girlfriend, ex-wife, ex-girlfriend, and common-law wife.*	●	●	●	●
Sometimes violence is the only way to express your feelings.	●	●	●	●
Some couples must use violence to solve their problems.	●	●	●	●
Violence between intimate partners is a personal matter and people should not interfere.	●	●	●	●

How old are you currently?

Age in years [   ]

What is your current marital status?

┈▷ ● *Now married*

┈▷ ● *Widowed*

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- *Divorced*
- *Separated*
- *Never married/single*

Are you currently employed?

- *Yes*
- *No*

What best describes your family's standard of living?

- *Poor*
- *Nearly poor*
- *Just getting by*
- *Living comfortably*
- *Very well off*

Compared to other individuals living in your community, would you say your family is financially better off or worse off than other families?

- *Much worse off*
- *Somewhat worse off*
- *About the same*
- *Better off*
- *Much better off*

How many years of schooling have you had? If currently enrolled in school, please provide the highest number of years of schooling you have COMPLETED.

Number of years

Thanks again for taking the time to complete this survey! All of the information you provided is very much appreciated. If there is anything else you would like to tell us about your background, culture, experience in the U.S., and attitudes towards violence, please feel free to share your thoughts in the space provided below my contact information.

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